Tuesday, May 1, 2012 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 27 / No. 142 P18 | Mobile Alerts: Text INQ ON BREAKING to 4467 | www.inquirer.net Twitter: @inquirerdotnet | Philippine Daily Inquirer Twitter: @dailyinquirer

Hottest day: Metro folk swelter in 36.6°C heat

By Kristine L. Alave

METRO MANILA and most of Luzon might be wilting under an unforgiving summer sun, but Eastern Visayas is finding sweet relief in occasional rain showers that have tempered the heat of recent days.

As Manila sweltered at 36.6 degrees Celsius yesterday—the highest this year so far—Tacloban City experienced intermittent rains the whole day Monday.

The rains were a welcome respite for residents of Tacloban whose hottest day was recorded

HOTTEST | A13

DOG DAY AFTERNOON A motorcycle rider takes his dog for a spin as the temperature soars to over 36 degrees Celsius on Sunday in Alabang, Muntinlupa City. AFRILLITY ANGELES

'Good news for workers'

CJ cries reprisal by P-Noy, hits PDI

By Marlon Ramos

CHIEF Justice Renato Corona yesterday claimed the Ombudsman's order directing him to explain his purported $10 million in bank deposits was part of President Aquino's alleged reprisal after his family lost Hacienda Luisita in the Supreme Court's landmark decision ordering the distribution of the sugar plantation to its workers.

"(It's) obviously a clear retaliation for our decision on Hacienda Luisita," Corona said in a

CORONA, A6

FIERY PROTEST Militants burn an American flag to express disgust with the alleged interference of the United States and China over a disputed shoal during a rally outside the Chinese consulate in Makati City on Monday. AP

Labor groups march to demand pay hikes

By Christine O. Avendaño in Manila and Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Inquirer Visayas

PRESIDENT Aquino, whose public approval rating is slipping amid rising prices and stagnating wages, is expected to announce a package of benefits for workers on Labor Day today, as organized workers stage protest rallies nationwide to press for wage increases.

"There will be good news (for workers) definitely," said Edwin Lacierda, the President's spokesperson.

But Lacierda declined to say what was in store for workers. He repeatedly told reporters to just wait for the President's announcement today.

"We will let the President do the announcement," he said at a press briefing.

Mr. Aquino is scheduled to have a breakfast meeting with labor leaders in Malacañang today where he will announce the package of benefits for workers.

The President announced on Sunday what was in store for 1.6 million government employees.

He said the government would release one month earlier the fourth and last installment of salary increases under the Salary Standardization III program.

GOOD! A4

360,777 local, overseas jobs up for grabs today—DOLE

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THOUSANDS of jobless Filipinos might get lucky today as the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) stages job and livelihood fairs across the country.

A total of 360,777 employment opportunities, offered by 1,396 employers, are awaiting qualified Filipinos, Labor Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz said.

Of this figure, more than 74,300 are being made available by 1,085 employers in the

360,777 LOCAL, A4

Ombudsman maintains she has power to probe Corona

By Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

ROSALES, Pangasinan—Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales said here on Monday that her office has jurisdiction over cases filed against impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona, escalating a debate on whether the graft buster can investigate an impeachable official.

The debate was sparked by the Inquirer's report on

OMBUDSMAN A6

Unease over rising US presence

FORT MAGSAYSAY—The squad from the US Army's 160th Infantry Brigade was moving quietly through the hills of Luzon when the staccato bursts of machine gunfire sent them into action.

About a dozen soldiers fired into the surrounding mountains, while a small contingent broke away to make a direct assault on the hidden gunmen. After a brief, intense gun battle, the squad cleared the area.

The firefight was part of joint military exercises in which the message, at least in part, appeared to be clear despite proclamations to the contrary. The exercises included mock beach invasion along coastlines facing China, whose military building and territorial claims in the South China Sea have alarmed some of its neighbors and jump-started the US

UNEASE! A6

Bright Intramuros night tours up

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ALREADY a popular stop on day tours of Manila, the historic walled city of Intramuros will soon become a nighttime destination, too, and not only for foreign visitors but also for Filipinos.

In six months, Fort Santiago, which houses the Rizal Shrine, will open its gates to guests for nightly cultural shows.

Nothing for night visitors to fear, as the Walled City will no longer be dark at night. The plans include installing lights on the centuries-old buildings and churches of Intramuros.

And the nearby Marcelinna Park by Pasig River will become a village of cafés, restaurants and shops, reminding Singapore's Clarke Quay, a historic

BRIGHT! A13

Manny lone billionaire in House of millionaires

By Gil C. Cabacungan

FOR THE second year running, Manny Pacquiao—the man with the golden fists—has won the distinction of being the richest among the 287 mostly millionaire members of the Philippine House of Representatives.

Ricardo Bering, chief of the House's record management section, said this was based on the 2011 statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) filed before the deadline yesterday by the House members.

"He is not worth even increased last year. He is still the richest here," Bering said of the Sarangani representative, whose powerful fists have won him eight boxing division titles and worldwide fame.

Bering said Pacquiao, who claimed a personal fortune of P1.134 billion in his 2010 SALN, reported an increase in

MANNY! A4

Resorts World Manila
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GRAND OPENING

Experience Exclusive 'Free Play' Attractions on May 4

Committed to provide new and exciting family attractions, Resorts World Manila opens its GameZoo amusement center, this Friday, May 4, at the 4F of Newport Mall.

Come and ride the thrilling 6D and 4D Riders featuring the most realistic simulators. Let the kids enjoy the Soft Play area. Play the most sought after and innovative arcade games, such as the multi-player version of Angry Birds called Crispy Birds, and over 100 exclusive games and attractions only at GameZoo.

It's going to be a fun-filled event with cosplayers, a Pump It Up Fiesta dance game exhibition, plus a special performance by the Von Trapp kids from The Sound of Music.

All are invited to register on opening day for a FREE PLAY on GameZoo's exciting offerings. (vouchers to be posted at the venue).

GameZoo is at the newest offering from Resorts World Manila, Newport City, Pasay.

For more information, visit www.rwmanila.com or call the Tourist Hotline at (632) 836-6333.

NATION
Slain Bombo Radyo driver also fed news reports to network / A8

LIFESTYLE
Boston Marathon —Surviving a beast of a race / D1

BUSINESS
SMC buying binge goes on with 8 more deals / B1

LIFESTYLE
What is body intelligence? / C3

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Puerto Princesa	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Cloudy with Rain

6/27	
2	26
3	25
5	13

SUERTRES

7	0
3	5
8	1

6	4
0	

MEGALOTTO 6/45

7 20 25 34 36 37

P7,749,487.80

6/55 GRAND LOTTO

9 17 22 31 34 36

P101,396,550.80

DND: Ignore Chinese war-mongering

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Jerry E. Esplanada

THE DEPARTMENT of National Defense (DND) has opted to ignore the war-mongering comments of a Chinese military general who called for "decisive action" by China against the Philippines in the dispute over the Panatag Shoal (Scarborough Shoal).

Without addressing Maj. Gen. Luo Yuan of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China, DND spokesperson Peter Galvez said people should be "more circumspect" in their comments on the issue, stressing that the Philippines wanted a peaceful resolution to the dispute.

"We cannot make an official statement based on opinions, especially commentaries," Galvez told reporters on Monday.

"It would really be hard to comment. That is his opinion. We respect his (opinion) but as for the department, it would not be proper for us to make statements," he added.

In a commentary posted on Friday on China.org.cn, Luo said China should counter-up with "decisive action" against the Philippines to assert China's claim over Panatag Shoal.

Galvez said the general's comments did not necessarily reflect that of the PLA.

"Let's not forget about all the other people... there are more peace-loving people," he said.

"We have to be more circumspect. There are a lot of people definitely who understand the value of discussion, of open communication in resolving issues," Galvez said.

"We can all have our opinions but we to the department maintain (our) peaceful initiatives. So one wants anything other than resolving this issue peacefully," he said.

The Philippines has formally asked China to bring their dispute to the International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (Itlos), which is based in Hamburg, Germany.

In a statement, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said "this approach would resolve on a long-term basis any differences of positions on the issue and ensure a peaceful, stable and lasting bilateral relationship between the Philippines and China."

Appropriate party

The DFA strongly believes Itlos is the "appropriate third-party adjudication body under international law, specifically the Unclos (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea), with respect to the rights and obligations of the two countries in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone."

But this was rejected by China.

On Sunday, the Chinese foreign ministry said that Beijing had turned down Manila's call for an international mediation to resolve the maritime dispute.

Dong Zhonghua, head of the country's boundary and ocean affairs office, refused to the Philippine embassy in Beijing its official positions on the issue.

In a statement posted on its website, the foreign ministry said China "demands that the Philippines respects the sovereignty of Chinese territory and does nothing more to aggravate or complicate the situation further."

It asserted that "Huangyan Island is an integrative part of Chinese territory," adding that the Philippine government's proposal to bring the issue to the "consensus-the fundamental principles of international relations and also inflicts serious damage on the common international order."

China claims the entire South China Sea as part of its territory, even waters close to the Philippines, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries.

Zhang Jun, the Chinese embassy spokesperson, had earlier told the Inquirer that Beijing's decision not to bring the issue to Itlos was final.

Zhang insisted that the shoal, which China calls Huangyan Island, "is China's inherent territory on which we have sufficient legal basis."

The Philippines, on the other hand, relies on the Scarborough Shoal is Regs de Mindoro and Tanabag Shoal, and insists it belongs in the country.

In a rare message, Zhang said Manila should "fully respect China's sovereignty."

Don't complicate things

He said the Philippine government must "commit to the consensus we reached on settling the matters through friendly diplomatic consultations, and not to complicate or aggravate the incident so that peace and stability in that area can be reached."

But Hernandez, the DFA spokesperson, had told reporters that "hopefully, the impasse would be resolved as quickly as possible with discussions with the Chinese side."

If the Chinese side insisted on not going to Itlos, he said they were "prepared to do it alone."

Last week, talks between the two sides ended in a stalemate, according to the DFA.

On Wednesday, DFA Assistant Secretary for Asia and Pacific Affairs Ma. Theresa Lazaro handed over a note verbale to Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Ma Keqing during a meeting at DFA headquarters in Manila.

The DFA "issued with concern the Chinese statements that they have become more assertive because the Philippines allegedly broke an agreement on the guidance of the Philippine and Chinese ships amid fishing boats (Ivan the shoal)."

It pointed out "there has never been an agreement reached."

"The DFA is of the view that it was unfortunate that the Chinese response was based on inaccurate appreciation of the facts and dynamics of the negotiations," it said.

The DFA informed the Chinese embassy that in order to address the impasse and to avoid future misunderstandings, the dialogue between the two governments must be based on complete, accurate and the truth, discuss that information must be an accurate rendition of facts.

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Make PH go after abusive military men, Clinton urged

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE UNITED States should press Philippine officials to hold abusive Filipino military personnel accountable for rights violations, the New York-based Human Rights Watch said yesterday.

The HRW said the United States should use its "2+2 dialogue" with the Philippines, which opens April 30 in Washington, D.C. (today in Manila), to discuss crucial rights issues and to get Philippine officials to halt the human rights violations committed by some military personnel.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Defense Secretary Leon Panetta are meeting with Philippine Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario for discussions on defense and strategic security issues.

The Philippines and the United States have a mutual defense treaty, which has taken on greater significance in the Philippines' feuds off with China over disputed territory in the West Philippine Sea (South China Sea). A standoff involving Philippine and Chinese vessels at Scarborough Shoal entered its fourth week yesterday.

The HRW, in previous reports and statements, has consistently pointed out the lack of any significant progress in Philippine efforts to end military abuses.

"Clinton and Panetta should press for a commitment from their Philippine counterparts for full military cooperation in the investigation of abuses and disciplinary measures against those who fail to do so," Elaine Pearson, HRW deputy Asia director, said in a statement issued yesterday.

"Too many Filipino have witnessed abuse as for the US to keep looking the other way," Pearson said.

According to HRW, the United States has not used its relations with the Philippines to raise concerns about rights abuses. HRW noted that Clinton visited Manila in November and the two countries held joint military exercises last month, but said all this, HRW said, US officials have not spoken about human rights violations in the Philippines.

"The US missed a key opportunity to engage publicly with the Philippine military about the need to end impunity for serious human rights abuses," Pearson said.

Kerr said that US officials meeting with their Philippine counterparts again, they should seize this chance, she said.

"The US shouldn't let such opportunities slide and 2+2 is an important chance to certify that oversight," Pearson added.

HRW and US officials should also discuss with the Philippines the abuses by paramilitary forces under the Philippine's control. These paramilitary forces have been reported in the killings of activists and the harassment of communities suspected of aiding communist rebels, the group said.

Pagpupugay sa Manggagawang Pilipino!

- mula sa Federation of Free Workers

Ngayong pugay ang Federation of Free Workers (FFW) sa lahat ng manggagawa ngayong Pandaigdigang Araw ng Paggawa!

Kasama sa pagdiriwang ito ang pagbibigaypugay sa dignidad ng manggagawang Pilipino sa pamamagitan ng patuloy na pagsulong ng ating adhikain para sa Mahirngal na Trabaho para sa lahat!

Uno sa lahat, bet ng FFW na ang kontrobersiyalnasyon—lalo na ng trabahong mga kasapi ng Unyon—ang pangunahing uri ng pagkawanantala sa manggagawa at sa Unyon. Inaasahs nito ang seguridad sa pagpasok at nagpapahima sa tagay sa lakas ng Unyon. Sinasaniwa ng FFW ang pananagan ng pakikasi ang kanyapatang mag-unyon at kalbakan sa trabaho ng manggagawa.

Nanimwala ang FFW na ang Unyon ang pinakamabisang daan upang matuas ang sahod ng manggagawa at matanggap ang mga benepisyo na nararapat sa kanila. Sa pamamagitan ng collective bargaining a maaaca na pag-usap ng mga kinatawan ng Unyon at management ay matutukoy ang pinaka-angkop na antas ng pagtaas ng sahod. Bukod rin ang suporta ng FFW sa mga paglaban upang itaas ang sahod sa pamamagitan ng mga wage boards o ng Kongreso.

Kaugnay ng ganap na pagyakap ng FFW sa lahat ng uri ng manggagawa ang patuloy na pagsusulong nito sa mga domestic workers.

Itinatanggagan ang FFW sa pamahalaan na i-ratipika sa ang ILO Convention 189 (angat sa Maranagi na 'Itobahs para sa mga Domestic Workers, sa lahong mga daling panahon. Dapat nang isabatas ang Domestic Workers Law na ganap sa kilalala sa kanyapatan ng mga domestic workers sa tamang pasahod, wastong oras ng trabaho, proteksyon atbp.

Nakikisa ang FFW sa lahat ng Unyon at mga samahang may malinaw sa pananindigan para sa kapakanan at kagalingan ng manggagawa —anuman ang pantrindigang pampulitika o oryentasyon nito. Ang pagkakaisa ang magpapalawak at magpapatibay sa hanay ng manggagawa sa harap ng mga hamon at pagsubok ng makabagong panahon.

Hinihikayat ng FFW ang lahat ng manggagawa na magtatag ng Unyon. Ito sa ang pinakamaiapanlang way natin sa ating mga sarili bilang manggagawa sa dakilang araw na ito. Laging handang tumulong ang FFW sa inyo! Pagkatutan natin ang pinagsama nating lakas! Magtatagumpay tayo ng husay, galing, talino at tapang para sa kagalingan at kabuhiran ng manggagawa!

Mabuhay ang Manggagawang Pilipino!

May problema ka sa iyo sa trabaho? Hakopag-ugnayan sa FFW:
National Headquarters: FFW Bldg., 1940 Taft Avenue, Malate, Manila •
Tel: +63 2 521-4409/ 521-9464 • Fax: +63 2 400-8656 •
Website: www.ffw.org.ph •
Email: sommunatula.thepresident@yahoo.com

Ang FFW ay kasapi ng International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), ang pederasyon ng mga Unyon sa buong daigdig.

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Contact us for detailed list of items for sale and
location map
Astoca (Philippines) Inc.
Unit 102 Jolliland, 670 EDSA, Pasay City
Tel 02 853 0421 Email info@astoca.com

'Twas no campaign sortie, says Palace

By Christine O. Avendaño and Gil Cabacungan

MALACAÑANG yesterday shrugged off criticism that President Aquino had started campaigning when he endorsed two pro-administration candidates in the 2013 elections during an out-of-town trip on Thursday.

Presidential spokesperson Ricky Carandang said there was no premature campaigning when Mr. Aquino told the people in Bongabong, Oriental Mindoro, how good Administrator Sonny Angara and Technical Education and Skills Development Authority Chief Joel Villanueva were in serving the government and for them not to forget the gain until 2016—apparently referring to the midterm polls.

The President also said he needed them to help him govern the country.

"He's just proud to have them," Lacierda said of Angara and Villanueva, who are running. Both being eyed as senatorial candidates of the LP headed by Mr. Aquino.

"There is no premature campaigning because nobody has filed a certificate of candidacy. So we don't know if they have already started to announce their desire to run," Lacierda said, referring to both Angara and Villanueva.

Both Angara and Villanueva welcomed Mr. Aquino's endorsement but said they had not yet made up their minds about joining the Senate race.

As the developed, progressive allies of the President are wary of the LP's plan to forge an alliance with Sen. Manuel Villar's Nacionalista Party for the 2013 elections.

"A coalition must be built on common principles and stands. If a coalition with the NP is built on common principles and stands on issues, then I am willing to give the matter some thought. If it is purely for electoral convenience, then I would definitely oppose it. We need to evolve beyond such alliances of convenience," said Akbayan party-list Rep. Walden Bello in a text message.

LP leaders confirmed they had initiated talks with the NP to get Villar's wife, former Las Piñas Rep. Cynthia Villar, and undersecretary Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano included in the LP's coalition for 2013.

The LP is playing catch-up to Vice President Jejomar Binay and former President Joseph Estrada who have already formed the United Nationalist Alliance (UNA) coalition for the 2013 and 2016 elections.

Rooney Kirk, head customer of the civil society group Kaya Natin, said the President should not go for "zero hero, zero sonar" in the 2013 elections such as former Akbayan party list Rep. Nina Evangelista Jurado-Lim in the 2010 senatorial race, the President's cousin Sen. Bam Aquino, former Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca and Quezon Rep. and LP spokesperson Lorenzo "Erin" Tañada III.

"We understand that this planned succession is a corollary of politics. But we would like to see and hope that the MP also embraces the reform agenda of the LP. It should not go of the 'divide, pamper' and mind I'm Full consequences. There a no one endorsing if the allies will not live up to what this administration stands for," said Kirk.

'Mining in PH behind times'

By Kristine L. Alave

FILIPINO miners still work under conditions that are a throwback to the previous century, a report by local and international labor groups has said.

Aside from outlining primitive working conditions, Filipino miners in the Caribbean and the Congo region...are of the highly mineralized regions in the country—use old technologies that aggravate environmental problems and put them in danger, the International Solidarity Mission on Mining (ISMM) said in its report released ahead of Labor Day.

The report said workers are also contracted, forlorn, depressed wages and workers' rights violations" in the mining sector.

"(Mining) companies do not only extract the natural resources of the country but also grossly exploit Filipino laborers with very low wages and rampant contractualization in mining companies," the ISMM report said.

An ISMM delegation, which includes representatives from mining and labor groups in Germany, Australia, Belgium, South Korea and Japan, visited Lepanto Mining Consolidated Corp. in Benguet and other mines in the Cordillera region.

Members of the delegation noted that Lepanto's miners in its operations in Mankayan suffered from unsuitable low labor circumstances, particularly low wages and dangerous working conditions.

Out of its more than 2,400 workers, 800 are contractual and the rest are illegals who only get about P200 to P350 a day" said Joe Saver of the Amicable Workers Union. The report also noted that mining firm did not provide protective equipment like snorkels for miners.

The ISMM urged the Philippine government to enact the respective mine workers and impose stricter regulations on mining companies to make the safety of miners paramount. It count also help in developing alternative industries locally so that the country could gain optimal value in treating using minerals extracted from the Philippines.

Miners and Geosciences Bureau Director Leo Jasareno said the government is also working on new laws that would regulate the mining industry, including rules to give license on smaller miners and higher fines on large-scale mining companies.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines declined to comment on the issues presented by the ISMM. Its spokesperson on record that the industry group made sure that its members followed national rules to protect miners and the environment.

"We encourage our members to comply with government laws as part of our advocacy for responsible and sustainable mining," said Becky G. Dumondagan, COMP spokesperson.

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SM City Sucat
SM Center Las Piñas
SM Center Muntinlupa
SM City Taytay
SM City Masinag

SM City Baguio
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SM City Calamba
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In cooperation with

Unarmed police vow maximum tolerance

By Nathaniel R. Mellon and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

ACTIVE the demolition of Bonifacio Shrine-Compound in Bonifacio City turned ugly last week, the police are not second-guessing the outcome of protests on Labor Day, but they have pushed up tensions from the inclusive.

Supt. Danilo Bratilla, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office's Public Information Office, said police guarding protests and rallies in Metro Manila vowed it will employ maximum tolerance, but would not hesitate to use force if their backs were pushed against the wall.

"The police say we will be displaying to the least force to guard protesters will not be armed with guns, but will bring clubs and shields. But we have police forces on standby with firearms, in case rallies go violent," Bratilla said in a telephone interview.

Policewomen

In addition, a significant number of policewomen will be deployed to the front lines, a significant departure from the usual setup where burly policemen are tasked with guarding the protesters.

"We are sending them to the front line because we expect many women to join the protests. Also, we have observed that there is less violence when women guard the front lines," Bratilla said.

Augmentation forces

Most of the police, who will be guarding the rallies, will come from The NCRPO's Civil Disturbance Management unit and the Regional Public Safety Battalion.

"We also have augmentation forces coming in from the police forces in Regions 3 and Region 4," Bratilla said.

Police will be not particular to guard critical buildings and places like the gate of the Chino Roces Bridge near Malacañang and the US Embassy, and transient contraptions points of protesters, such as Mabuhay Rotonda in Quezon City and in Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

Bratilla hoped that a repeat of the Ditimbang shutdown, where one resident was killed, would be avoided, and asked protesters to be vigilant against rogue elements in their groups.

"We cannot afford to have another Ditimbang type incident," he said.

Robredo appeal

In a statement, Interior Secretary Jesse Robredo said police exercised disperse management with would exercise "maximum tolerance" during the Labor Day rallies.

But at the same time Robredo warned rally leaders against undertaking violent demonstrations.

"While we recognize the Labor Day protesters' right to air their grievances against the government, it is also their duty to maintain peace and order and to be vigilant against subversive elements who may infiltrate their and provoke and incite gun violence among their ranks during the rallies," Robredo said.

He said it would be unfortunate for protesters to engage in violent demonstrations just to get their message across as for any political purpose. "We should maintain peace and order during the rallies so that we can show that our country's body goes home unharmed," he added.

Highest alert

The Philippine National Police (PNP) has placed its forces on the highest alert nationwide to secure police camps and vital installations.

The PNP went on full alert in 11 out of 16 regions, including Metro Manila, a day ahead of the global observance of Labor Day today.

The PNP was taking extra security measures since "various threat groups might take advantage of the conduct of simultaneous rallies and demonstrations in or their premises and vicinities," Chief Supt. Agrimero Cruz Jr., the PNP spokesperson.

"Our commanders are strictly instructed to secure all PNP camps and offices, and installations, economic key points and places of convergence of people," ordered PNP chief, Director General Nicanor Bartolome.

The PNP's elite Special Action Force (SAF) was also placed on full alert.

Other units in Regions 1, 2, 5, 7 and 8 remain on heightened alert status, which is one notch lower.

Military mobilized

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), meanwhile, said it had mobilized "all available assets for intelligence and security operations" in support of the PNP during Labor Day rallies, including the ongoing Asian Development Bank 45th annual meeting from May 2 to 5.

Apart from 69 anti-explosive and ordnance disposal teams, the military is also ready to deploy at least four civil disturbance management companies against the targets of the PNP.

The AFP said it would shoulder watch places like the LRT and MRT stations, bus terminals and drop-ping-tanks apart from utility sites.

360,777 local, overseas jobs up for grabs today—DOLE

From page A2

country while the rest are up-port entries overseas.

The employers are looking for cooks, food attendants, waiters/waitresses, bakers, pastry chefs, office clerks, sales consultants, graphic artists, brand specialists, welders and welpers, technicians, cashiers, dishwashers, front desk officers, IT personnel and logistics assistants.

The job fairs, held in 33 venues nationwide, also have opportunities for 800 assistants, secretaries, attendees, waitresses, bartenders, sales clerks, construction workers, inventory clerks, utility workers, canister baggers, technicians and mechanics, among others.

Applicants may even get hired on the spot, said Baldoz. She urged the more than 200,000 job seekers who might not get hired immediately must not worry because the processing of their applications would continue after the daylong event.

"Selecting job applicants can be a tough challenge for employers. They may need more time to review job applications to go over details of their credentials and to interview candidates," the labor chief said.

Baldoz also said that "investment in carefully hiring procedures saves time and helps lessen incompatible job placements, which in the long run, will contribute to the goal of providing decent and productive work for all."

World Trade Center

In Metro Manila, the job fair will be held at World Trade Center in Pasay City, where more than 97,800 jobs are open.

In the Cordillera Administrative Region, applicants can pro-ceed to Baguio Convention Center, where 18,295 job vacancies await them.

In Central Visayas, at least 122,750 job vacancies will be offered in various job fair areas at Sheffana National School, Bohol; Ilaya Sports Complex and Cebu Provincial Sports Complex in Cebu City; University of San Carlos South Campus and in Cebu City; Pardo B. Fernez Sports Complex-Eat Gym in Liloan, Cebu; Bolano, San Municipal Hall in Cebu and SM Mall in Tagbilaran City.

Records from DOLE-Cebu show that over 8,900 jobs are available in the Bicol Region; 2,175 in Caraga's Valley; 20,000 in Central Luzon; 15,691 in Calabarzon; 900 in Mimaropa; 2,995 in the Bicol Region; 5,571 in Eastern Visayas; 1,000 in Western Visayas; 15,467 in the Zamboanga Peninsula; 4,000 in Northern Mindanao; 21,067 in Davao; 13,767 in Soccsksargen; and 25,000 in Caraga.

"So, my advice to applicants is not to be optimistic and to be hopeful because there will be enough job vacancies and livelihood opportunities for everyone at the job fairs," said Baldoz.

'Good news for workers'

From page A1

The pay increase for government workers will be released on June 1 instead of July 1.

This was a repeat of what President Aquino did on Labor Day in 2011 when he also announced two subsidies for workers.

Mr. Aquino also had a breakfast meeting with labor leaders last year.

Lucindy said the breakfast meeting between the President and labor leaders would be another opportunity for the Chief Executive to "hear our what their concerns are."

This way the President can address the workers' concerns, he added.

The most urgent national concern than the administration should address is controlling escalating prices, according to results of a nationwide survey conducted by Pulse Asia in March.

The Aquino administration received its lowest public approval rating yet this summer.

Prices of basic goods and services have gone up mainly as a result of a series of fuel price increases, while minimum wages have stagnated.

Piago however, job creation and poverty reduction were among the top five concerns that the administration must address, the survey found.

Wage boards

The administration has left the granting and revising of any wage increases to regional tripartite wage and productivity boards.

The board recently granted an increase of P12 in the daily minimum wage in Western Visayas, an amount workers found too little.

"It is an insult to workers. It's not even enough to pay for One round-trip jeepney fare of P16," Elmer Borlo, spokesperson of Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU-Panay) told Bulatlat.com on Monday.

The KMU is calling for the legislation of wage increases and the scrapping of the regional wage boards.

Protest marches

Piero said thousands of workers and their supporters on Panay Island would join Labor Day protests to demand a P125 across-the-board increase to the daily minimum wage, a stop to contractualization and the scrapping of the Oil Deregulation Act, which they blame for the continued increase in fuel prices.

He said KMU-Panay and Bagong Alyansang Makabayan would lead some 2,500 protesters in Iloilo and around 500 protesters each in the capital town of Roxlio in Aklan and in Roxas City in Capiz.

In Manila, a broad alliance of labor groups is expected to lead 20,000 workers in a march on Chino Roces Bridge (formerly Mendiola) slated to demand higher wages and security of tenure, and to fight labor contractualization.

Something significant

In a statement, Saguisag said it is not expecting "something good and hopeful" from the Labor Day breakfast between President Aquino and leaders of various workers' groups.

"We are hoping that President Aquino will announce something significant, something hopeful which will uplift the morale of the workers who are sinking deeply into abject poverty due to increasing prices of commodities and the sky-rocketing cost of services," said Dennon the Mendoza, president of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines and one of the convenors of Bagkisan.

Sinn Maglalo of Bayan Muna-gagamit said the coalition would submit to Mr. Aquino a letter detailing the call of the latter to certify as urgent House bill No. 6832, the consolidated version of the security of tenure measure, and to ratify the International Labor Organization's Convention for Domestic Workers.

The list of concerns that the group will present to Mr. Aquino includes the review of all policies on liberalization, deregulation and privatization; a substantial increase in pay for workers; and a stop to demolitions and forced evictions in urban areas.

"These problems are not intractable. If the President doesn't act on these issues now, he faces the wrath of the workers," said Magalzo. With a report from Jocelyn Uy

OFF LIMITS. Government workers place barricades at the Mendiola Peace Arch in Manila on the eve of Labor Day to prevent protesters from going near Malacañang Palace. —PHOTO BY ALEXIS CORRAL

Manny lone billionaire in House of millionaires

From page A1

his net worth in 2011. Being declined to give exact figures since those leaders have not given the go-signal for the public disclosure of the SALNs.

Lone billionaire

Based on the 2010 SALNs, Pacquiao was the richest member of the House last year—and the only billionaire in the chamber.

His assets then consisted of P357.950 million in real properties and P736.2 million in personal and other properties. He had no liabilities.

In contrast, Antipolo's Rep. Rafael Mariano was the poorest lawmaker, with a net worth of P75,711.

Pacquiao was reported to have earned at least $13 million each from his fights with Shane Mosley and Juan Manuel Marquez in 2011, aside from his winnings. Data consumed entertainment, businesses and as a member of Congress.

Increased scrutiny

Pacquiao's increasing wealth is expected to highlight further the supposed steep plunge in his tax payments, which media reports said fell from P100 million in 2008 to only P7 million in 2009.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue has filed charges against Pacquiao for his alleged failure to submit complete documents in his earnings. Pacquiao has questioned the filing of the case, saying it was baseless.

House Secretary General Marilyn B. Yap said that almost 300 personnel of the House members have had filed their SALNs as of 5 p.m. yesterday. Yap said her staff would validate the SALNs before releasing information to the public.

Yap also said she had noticed a marked increase in the net worth of lawmakers, especially in the face of increased scrutiny by the public and media as a result of the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona in connection with his assets.

More conscious now

"Our members have become more conscious of the SALN. That's why they have made an effort to make a complete report this time," said Yap.

Pacquiao topped the list of 10 richest House members last year. That list included Negros Occidental Rep. Alfredo Benitez, who was worth P622.847 million; Negros Occidental Rep. Julio Ledesma IV, worth P501.600 million; and Leyte Rep. Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, worth P475.611 million.

Also in the top 10 were Iloilo Rep. Augusto Syjuco, worth P289.682 million; Speaker Pelayo Cosio Belmonte Jr., worth P283.291 million; Taytay Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, P199.593 million; Bacoor Mayor Strike Revilla, P195.78 million; and Iloilo Rep. Jerry Treñas, P195.596 million.

Former Presidents and Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was the 17th richest representative with a net worth of P140.212 million.

Aquino's assets

Malacañang yesterday said President Aquino and almost all of the members of his Cabinet had filed their SALNs.

"We expect all of them to comply with the deadline," presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said, adding that Mr. Aquino filed his SALN on April 24.

Vice President Jejomar Binay and Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr. have also filed their SALNs.

In his SALN for 2011, Mr. Aquino declared a net worth of P14.9 million. This represented a P4.8-million increase from the previous year. Mr. Aquino has said the increase in his income came from his salary as President and Senator Pimentel Cayetano Aquino.

Corona's SALN

Lacierda said the Prince was hopeful that Corona, whose ouster from the Supreme Court is being supported by Malacañang, would disclose his SALN as promised by the Chief Justice's lawyers.

"He certainly hope as he assures that would be in compliance with the constitutional provision on disclosure and filing of SALNs," Lacierda said.

He said he would be interested in taking a look at Corona's SALN. With reports from Christina O. Avendaño and Jaqueline Rosario

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday - May 1, 2012
Joseph, the Worker
1st Reading: Gen 1:26-2:3 (or Col 3:14-15, 17, 23-24)

God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness; let them rule over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over the cattle, over the wild animals, and over all the creatures that crawl on the ground." So God created man in his image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it; rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the sky, over every living creature that moves on the ground."

God said, "There, given everywhere and bearing plant seed, to you it shall be for food; to all the beasts of the land, all the birds of the sky, to every living creature that moves on the ground, I give all clothing green vegetation for food." And it was so.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. There was evening and there was morning: the sixth day.

Thus were finished the sky and earth and all their vast array. By the seventh day the work God had done was completed, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had done. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on that day he rested from all the work he had done in his creation.

Matthew 13:54-58

Jesus went to the hometown and taught the people in their synagogue. They were amazed and said, "Where did he get this wisdom and these special powers? Isn't he the carpenter's son? Isn't Mary his mother and aren't James, Joseph, Simon and Judas his brothers? Aren't all his sisters living here? Then did he get all this?" And so they took offense at him.

Jesus said to them, "The only place where prophets are not valued is in their hometown and in their own family." And he did not perform many miracles there because of their lack of faith.

Reflection

Today's Gospel is very much related to the first reading of the day. Joseph the carpenter, but as "The Holy Old Man." Every time I hear it, I felt pain for this man, who is described as "righteous" and "devoted"—devoted—to an unwed girl-mother. Why did? He made himself old in order to mother him. It is as if we cannot take the full presence of an adult man. Since we know so little about him, we have modeled St. Joseph according to our image of what a holy man is. He need not worry his masculinity to him. In fact, Jesus could be no paradigm of masculinity for a man. Despite the flashes, she reflected, she wasn't, he is Joseph the Worker.

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Corona cries reprisal by Aquino, hits Inquirer

From page A1

text message to reporters.

Ombudsman Candicia Carpio Morales issued the order to Corona on April 20—four days before the editorial bashed down in final verdict affirming an earlier ruling handed down on Nov. 22, 2011, which ended the decades-old fight over the sprawling sugar plantation.

Corona vehemently denied that he was keeping multimillion-dollar deposits in different banks.

"It simply does not exist," he said. "It's part of the black propaganda and mind-conditioning (preparatory to the resumption of the impeachment) trial on May 7."

Corona, who is facing an impeachment trial in the Senate for allegedly fabricating entries in his statements of assets, liabilities and net worth, said the accusations that he had dollar accounts were "no different from the phony LRA (Land Registration Authority) list, phony US property list, phony letters to the Supreme Court."

Inquirer slammed

He accused the Inquirer, which came out with the scandalous article on Morales's order on Sunday, of colluding with the Ombudsman in publishing the story.

"Why are they parting division to the hacienda and not to the impeachment court?" Corona asked. "The motive of the Ombudsman and the Inquirer are obviously well-coordinated and in synch," he said.

Corona refuted the arguments of his lawyers that the Ombudsman had no jurisdiction over the Chief Justice, whose mode of course is specified in the Constitution, along with that of the President and other constitutional bodies.

In its April 24 ruling, the Supreme Court reaffirmed its Nov. 22 decision, which ordered the distribution of the 4,915-hectare agricultural estate to the 6,296 registered farm worker-beneficiaries.

The court also reaffirmed its valuation of the hacienda based on its fair market value in 1989 at P98,000 per hectare, when the hacienda hammered out a stock distribution option in lieu of outright land distribution under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Mr. Aquino's mother, the late President Corazon Aquino, launched a year earlier.

P-Noy client on program

The hacienda had sought at least P1 million per hectare, or higher, depending on the value of adjoining property and high agricultural productivity in some areas based on values in 2006 when the Department of Agrarian Reform issued a notice of coverage of the estate after the farmer-stockholders claimed their lives had not improved under the 1989 deal.

Mr. Aquino has refrained from taking a position on the court ruling, saying that he still had to receive a copy of the decision in spite of demands by the beneficiary that his government begin the process of distribution now that the court ruling had become final and executory.

The President also has been urged to direct the Department of Social Welfare and Development to mobilize assistance to the farmers during a difficult process of transition to farmer-cultivators in short his desire to continue to proceed with the agrarian reform program he

CORONA

made before assuming office.

Almost 1 million ha remain, including some of the most productive agricultural estates are yet to be distributed under the program scheduled to end in two years.

Ombudsman maintains she has power to probe Corona

From page A1

Saturday that Morales, acting on complaints filed in the Office of the Ombudsman, had ordered Corona to explain his millions in peso and US dollar bank accounts.

Indicating that he would not comply, Corona insisted through his lawyers that the Ombudsman had no jurisdiction over the Chief Justice.

But Miriam Defensor Santiago disagreed, telling a radio interview on Sunday that the Ombudsman can investigate impeachable officials.

Here, on Monday Morales herself cited the source of her power to investigate Corona.

"The Ombudsman Act empowers me to go over all complaints against all government officials, [regardless] of how the complaints were elevated to the office," Morales said.

A retired Supreme Court justice, Morales was reacting to Corona's assertion, made through his lawyer Ramon Esguerra, that the Ombudsman had no jurisdiction over the Chief Justice and there was no reason for him to comply with Morales' April 20 order to explain in writing his millions in peso and US-dollar accounts in the bank that he could not have earned on his modest government salary.

MORALES

Morales told reporters that there were three complaints on the alleged undeclared income of Corona, among other charges.

"Since I am mandated to evaluate the complaint, [as long as] no other public officer, I had to assess the evidentiary value of the complaint and on preliminary evaluation, I thought that the Chief Justice should be heard," Morales said.

She said, following the provision of the Ombudsman Act, which says that if there is reasonable ground to believe that his/her inquiry should be conducted, that the Ombudsman should ask the impeachable officer for purpose of determining whether there is action or that there should be filing of an impeachment case to answer within 72 hours from notice," she said.

Morales did not go into details, as the answered only three questions, Esguerra said.

Morales was here to inaugurate the regional office of the deputy ombudsman for Luzon.

Matter of interpretation

Responding to a question posed during a radio interview on Sunday, Santiago said the Constitution does not expressly prohibit the Ombudsman from investigating the Chief Justice.

"It's a matter of interpretation. There is no categorical prohibition. But the framers of the situation [involved]," she said, stressing that the powers must be the right to prosecute "an impeachable official like the Chief Justice."

But Santiago cautioned the Ombudsman from proceeding with the preliminary investigation, as it would "complicate matters because there would be two separate investigations concerning the same subject matter."

"I would think that is understood at this time because he's being asked to fight a battle on two fronts," Santiago said, adding, "Let him first defend himself [in the Senate]," Santiago said. "If he is found guilty, then he would be the subject of [a criminal] investigation, where the Ombudsman could come in to his market value in 1989 at P98,000 per hectare, when the hacienda hammered out a stock distribution option in lieu of outright land distribution under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Mr. Aquino's mother, the late President Corazon Aquino, launched a year earlier.

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CORONA

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since the Ombudsman is like our fiscal or prosecutor," she said.

Yes, she can

University of the Philippines law professor Harry Roque was firmly behind Morales in the investigation of the Chief Justice.

Roque said on Monday that under the Ombudsman Law, Morales could investigate even impeachable officials for the purpose of recommending their impeachment to Congress.

The basis for the statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) also contains a provision authorizing the Ombudsman to verify the information in the SALN, Roque said.

The Ombudsman may even look into commerce, or inhibition that non-withholding from the SALN form, Roque added.

Roque said that if Morales did not do her duty and look into Corona's accounts, she might be impeached.

"It's just (Corona's) luck that we have a constitutional Ombudsman now," he said.

Investigates only

Antonio Buji, Jose Edgardo Angara said the Ombudsman could investigate the Chief Justice, but not compel, prosecute or bring cases against him.

Speaking with the Inquirer by telephone on Monday, Angara, a lawyer and a spokesperson on the House prosecution team in the impeachment trial, explained that under the Constitution only Congress can remove an impeachable official from office.

In her April 20 order, Morales told Corona to explain the bank accounts, including those maintained in US dollars the aggregate value of which amounts to at least $10,000,000."

Corona issued a statement on Monday denying he had $10 million in the bank. "It simply does not exist," he said.

The Chief Justice said in investigation by the Ombudsman was part of Malacañang's "retaliation" for the Supreme Court's April 24 decision upholding in ruling in November last year that ordered the distribution of Hacienda Luisita, a sugar plantation in Tarlac province owned by the family of President Aquino.

Of course, not

Malacañang quickly responded, with presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda pointing out that Morales' order was dated April 20 and received by Corona on April 23, a day before the Supreme Court handed down its final ruling on Hacienda Luisita.

Obviously, Lacierda said, the Ombudsman's order is not a retaliation for the Hacienda Luisita ruling.

"It is highly possible that since the Chief Justice already knew that he was required to explain by the Ombudsman, he is now conditioning the public to think the letter was a retaliation, when in fact it came before the Luisita decision," Lacierda said in a text message to reporters.

He said the Chief Justice "should be more prudent with his statements."

"It clearly shows his nearness, matibis behavior," Lacierda said.

New impeachment

Later, at a press briefing, Lacierda said the Ombudsman could "recommend a case of impeachment against an impeachable official." At least this was the "tenor" of Morales' order to Corona, Lacierda said.

A new impeachment complaint will have to wait until Senators if the Senate acquits Corona, who is under trial on charges of culpable violation of the Constitution, graft and corruption, and betrayal of public trust.

If he is convicted and removed from office, the Office of the Ombudsman could bring criminal charges against him based on the complaints now under investigation. — With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Michael Lim Ubac and Leila Salaverria

Unease over rising US presence

From page A1

military "pivot" to the region.

"But US policy, which will include sending more troops and ships to the region, appears to have picked up speed in recent weeks.

On Thursday, Japan and the United States announced what was effectively a compromise on Okinawa that calls for thousands of Marines to leave the island in an attempt to allow others to remain on the strategic island despite local objections. And on Monday US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta will meet their Philippine counterparts in Washington, the highest level of meeting after months of talks to expand the US military presence in the Philippines.

Ramping up the number of troops in the Philippines—even if they are coming in and out from temporary bases as predicted—would still be something of a reversal for the nervous after Philippine lawmakers forced the closing of US bases, including the giant Subic Bay Naval Station. The base, which had been a cornerstone of the US military presence in Asia for nearly a century, was eventually ordered Filipinos' ouster that the facility served as a painful reminder of decades of US rule.

Such feelings still run strong among Filipinos. Hundreds of people protested in Manila against the recent joint exercises and security talks in Washington approached, activists sent out a media alert of planned protests on Monday near the US Embassy. The alert included a link goes to news and, labeling the foreign ministry a "US satellite office.")

But fear of a rising China has outlasted for many Filipinos—including Brazilian Aquino—that the country needs an increased American military presence. A continuing standoff with China over Scarborough Shoal, in which patrol boats from both nations are positioned near the rock outcroppings, has added to concerns about the Philippines' vulnerability.

Key link in US 'rebalancing'

A Congressional Research Service report published this month called the relationship with the Philippines "a key link in the evolving US foreign policy 'pivot' or 'rebalancing' toward Asia, particularly Southeast Asia."

Despite the closing of Subic Bay, the US military presence in the Philippines has grown in recent years. Beside the joint military exercises that occur annually, the United States keeps about 600 troops at a time in the Philippines, many of them various assisting in counterterrorism efforts to the south. The mission started after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States and the South Administration sought to smother armed groups worldwide, especially those linked to al-Qaida.

The renewed interest in building up bases in the Philippines has been evident for months. In November, Clinton traveled to Manila and proclaimed, on the deck of a US warship in Manila Bay, ran in an and military support for the Philippines. She also refused the Chinese by referring to an area of the South China Sea as the West Philippine Sea, a name used by the Philippines but not often inshore. (The Scarborough Shoal lies within that area.)

Several members of Congress have also visited the country in recent months to discuss military cooperation, including Senator John McCain and Joseph Lieberman, both senior members of the Senate Armed Services Committee.

The political sensitivity over US troops in a former military post a long way toward explaining how carefully both Philippine and US officials have presented negotiations over possibly increasing military ties.

Fine-tuning engagement

Raul Hernandez, a spokesperson for the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs, was quick to stress in several interviews that permanent US military bases were not being considered.

"We are fine-tuning and recalibrating our engagement," he said. "We are talking about more frequent visits and more engagement with the United States, not about military bases. What is very new, what is unsupportable are made, they will conform to our laws and our Constitution."

That type of relationship, in fact, is emblematic of what American officials say the new "pivot" will mainly look like. Bolstering the armed forces to shrink the military budget, and the difficulties in winning approval for permanent bases abroad, the new strategy seemingly called for more rotational deployments.

In those cases, US troops would be appearing on a temporary basis in other countries and live in less permanent facilities.

For those Filipinos sensitive to increased bases, there may not be much of a distinction between permanent and temporary.

A precision of what such arrangements might look like can be found in Mindanao. At a Philippine military base in Zamboanga, several hundred members of the US military have been serving on a rotating basis—for nearly a decade.

LOUD AND CLEAR A protester displays a placard in front of riot police during a brief rally before the US Embassy in Manila on Monday. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Repair facility at Subic

The Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines has a public affairs officer, a dedicated website and a mass hall stationed by the same agency that cracks down on military base during maritime around the world.

The Zamboanga facility also has videoconferencing services for soldiers in communication with their families.

In 2009, a Philippine Navy lieutenant, Nancy Gaelan, told the Philippine Senate that when she was stationed in Mindanao she had worked with the Americans serving there. She testified that the United States had built "permanent structures" at sites around the southern Philippines that are off-limits to the Philippine Navy. The United States consistently says it has no permanent bases in the country.

Though the Zamboanga facility has many hallmarks of an overseas military base, its mission appears with having access built personally deployed to the Philippines in a strictly noncombat role to advise and assist the AFP—the Armed Forces of the Philippines—to "share information, and to conduct joint and humanitarian operations."

While the details of a potential increase in the US military presence have not been announced, there may be a date as it is recently announced "interest deal to refuel may be about to happen. On April 15, a Philippine Navy official defense minister Honasan Rogelio Industries announced a deal to work with Swiftships Heavy Industries, which maintains a large shipbuilding and repair facility at Subic Bay. That opens the door to large-scale servicing of US military ships in Subic Bay for the first time in almost 20 years.

In a news release announcing the deal, Pinstrigers Inc. said the companies "will work together on providing maintenance, repair and logistics services to the US Navy and other customers in the Western Pacific region." — New York Times News Service

House probe of airline's treatment of PWDs urged

By Cynthia D. Baluca

THE PARTY-LIST group Akbayan has asked the House of Representatives to look into budget carrier Cebu Pacific's treatment of persons with disabilities (PWDs) after passengers here in Iloilo City recounted their recent experience with the airline.

Akbayan Rep. Walden Bello said the group would use it if that the airline was made accountable for its "terrible treatment" of disabled passengers.

Jalbon, a bilateral leg amputee, said in media interviews that she was forced to crawl down the airplane ramp in Singapore last week after Cebu Pacific failed to inform her that she had to pay P11,000 to use a wheelchair lift. Cebu Pacific gained the blame for her predicament on the travel agency who arranged Jalbon's flight.

"That is a breakdown of committed responsibility. The burden is on Cebu Pacific and all other airlines to ensure the safety and convenience of all their passengers, and they should be doubly attentive to the needs of PWDs who are flying redeyeburn," Bello said.

Bello also took exception to the Civil Aeronautics Board statement that it was an industry practice to charge PWDs an extra fee for the use of wheelchairs' lifts. He said this revealed a bigger problem in ensuring the free and unimpeded mobility of PWDs.

"It's not correct to ask persons with disabilities to pay for their physical conditions," Bello said. "A wheelchair lift, or any other facility that would ensure the mobility of PWDs, should be made readily available to anyone who needs it."

Akbayan strongly believes that it is the government's duty to ensure that PWDs live a life of dignity, and that includes the right to unimpeded travel and mobility," Bello said.

Last year, Bello led investigations into drug retail giant Mercury Drug Corporation's refusal to provide PWDs a 20-percent discount on medicines, as stipulated by law. The investigations resulted in the signing of a memorandum of agreement between Mercury Drug and the committee on social services that ended the feuding chain of drugstore's commitment to honor the 20-percent discount.

Reports quoted Cebu Pacific vice president for communications Candice Iyog as explaining that PWDs flying to Singapore are usually told beforehand that they would have to pay extra to use a wheelchair lift at the airport.

Iyog said their "airport handling channels should've informed Jalbon beforehand."

"We've sent a reminder to our agencies to make sure to inform passengers about the wheelchair lift fee charged by the Singaporean ground handler at Changi budget terminal," she said.

She also said that Cebu Pacific does not set the fee for the wheelchair lift as the Singapore airport is a unit that was passed on. Airline personnel tried to help Jalbon and her husband to disembark but they refused, she added.

The Philippine Wheelchair Sports Foundation welcome him Jalbon as the president of the Federation of the Disabled in Cavite and the Association of Persons With Disabilities of Tagaytay City.

Cooking gas prices slashed by P5/kg

By Amy R. Remo

RETAILERS of cooking gas have slashed their prices by between P5 and P5.25 per kilogram effective today (Tuesday) to reflect the continued downtrend in the international component price of liquefied petroleum gas.

Petron Corp. cut its LPG price by P5.20 per kg, equivalent to a P65 decrease for every 12-kg cylinder, in the same time. Petron rolled back the price of its unbLPG to P1,20 a liter.

Meanwhile, Iris LPG Corp. also cut the price of its lichtar brand of cooking gas (formerly Shellane) by P5 per kg, or roughly P60 per 12 kg tank.

Correction

IN THE APRIL 30 ISSUE, a business page on Page B1 announced the peso-dollar exchange rate as of April 27. The correct exchange rate was P42.37—not P42.93—to the US dollar.

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given to the public that the following Stock Certificates of ASIAN HOSPITAL, INC. issued in favor of HEALTH TRUSTWORTH HOLDING INC. were declared lost in the offices of Lone executed by Atty. LUIS R. LAUREANA and recorded in the notarial register of Atty. Hermenio B. Sevilla, Makati Public for Mandaluyong City on April 10, 2012, as Doc No. 326; Page No. 72; Book III; Series of 2012; to wit:

Stock Certificate No.	Number of Shares
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
3 more certificates	150,000,000

Any person regarding the above certificates of stock is requested to notify Asian Hospital, Inc. at its principal office at Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City, within one (1) year from the date of last publication. After such time, the right to make such claims shall be forever barred and the Corporation shall cancel in its books the above certificates of stock and issue new certificates in lieu thereof.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY MAY 1 2012

HIGH ON HORSEBACK Escaping from the roaring heat of summer in Metro Manila, residents enjoy horseback riding and the view of Taal Volcano at Tagaytay Picnic Grove in Tagaytay City on Cavite. AREA ALVAREZ

₱18 wage hike in Calabarzon, but …

By Maricar Cinco
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SAN PEDRO, Laguna—Ricky Pangilinan, 42, an employee of an electrician's firm in Imus, Cavite, had already heard the news that an P18 daily wage increase and P12.50 daily productivity allowance will be implemented in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon), starting on May 15.

But Pangilinan, who is paid P900 a day, said he will not get one penny since his daily pay is more than the present P500 minimum wage in the province.

He earns P500 a day "only because I've been with the company for 22 years," Pangilinan said.

With his salary, he said, raising his family of five is a big challenge. "I'm a helper, so it's really difficult and difficult. If not for the little amount my wife earns from selling stuff on the street, I don't think my kids can go to school," he said.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) is implementing the P18 raise on daily minimum wage and the P12.50 daily productivity allowance in Calabarzon under the two-tier wage system, a new scheme the labor department is piloting in the region.

"That's good (the wage increase), but that doesn't affect us (since) we're (earning) above the minimum wage already," Pangilinan said.

Although he is entitled to the productivity allowance, "that's still for the company to determine. What if (the company) says they cannot afford it?" he asked.

Under the new wage order, the highest minimum wage rate, which is Tier 1, is set at P349.50 in nonagriculture establishments; P328.50 in agricultural plantation (the sugarcane plantation) and P304.50 in agriculture noplantation or farms under 24 hectares; and P255 in the retail and service sector.

That is an additional P12.50 for workers in the nonagricultural sector; P8.50 in the agricultural plantation; P9.50 in agricultural employment; and P18 per day in the retail and service establishments.

The current adjustment is "…to uplift the standards of living of workers, a wage level that takes into account the organic poverty threshold, average wage and related socioeconomic parameters," the DOLE said in a statement.

The productivity-based adjustment, or Tier 2, is set at P12.50 per day for those earning P255 a day and above. This amount could go higher depending on the productivity improvement and incentives committee (PIIC), which is composed of both the management and workers' representatives.

"But all companies have the PIIC (or Under this wage order), they have to form their PIICs within three months (from May 15)," said Rosvilla dela Rosa, secretary of the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board.

Labor groups were not too happy with the wage increase.

"That is not small, not even enough to provide relief to the workers given the (economic) crisis," said Homie Macatpan, spokesperson of the Pagkakaisa ng Samahang ng Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan (Pasaknat).

Pasaknat, the regional group of the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno, has been pushing for a P125 across-the-board wage increase.

The moderate Associated Labor Unions-Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (ALU-TUCP), which petitioned for P90 raise in Calabarzon in March, questioned the government's low-the wage system, saying it "promotes inequality and discourages maximize" among workers.

"Two workers working in the same job by the same company could be earning different wages because the management may say the other one is more productive than the other," said Alan Tanjusay, ALU-TUCP policy advocacy officer.

According to Dela Rosa, the new wage order covers all 2.5 million wage and salary workers, including contractual employees and employees.

She said the new rate was based on the region's poverty threshold and the companies' capacity to pay its employees.

At present, Calabarzon's poverty threshold, or the amount a family of five needs to meet its basic needs, is at P252.25 a day.

4 soldiers, civilian slain by NPA rebs

By Jean Escandor B.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

MAGALLANES, Cavite—Communist rebels surrounded an Army unit on a "peace and development mission" in Lobo, Canaman Norte, on Sunday, killing four soldiers and a civilian, a military official said.

"The Army soldiers (in) our area of responsibility," Lt. Col. Ephimero Macalinog, commander of the 49th Infantry Battalion based in the capital town of Ermi, told the Inquirer yesterday.

Macalinog said the team of 14 soldiers was staying in the barangay hall in Ilihan to help in a youth basketball tournament when 50 New People's Army (NPA) rebels launched the shooting spree.

Maj. Angelo Guillermo, spokesperson of the 9th Infantry Division, identified the fatalities as Cpl. Ricardo A. Jerillo, the team leader; Pfc. Paulo Gonzo, Pfc. Teodoro Ondo Jr. and Pfc. Ernesto D. Pontao Jr., and one Francisco Rueles, 69.

Guerrero said a soldier, Pfc. Lebron Brenda, and another civilian, Rhido Mathong, were wounded.

A handheld radio set, one laptop, one M3 submachinegun, ten rifles and a .45-cal pistol were seized by the rebels, police chief Inspector Manuel Matyas in Lobo, he added.

In Davao del Sur, NPA rebels released the five civilians they took as hostages while fleeing from pursuing army soldiers in Barangay San Miguel in Magsaysay town on Friday, authorities said.

Barong Bantal, a village councilman, said the civilians were used as "human shields" by the guerrillas after attacking a military detachment in nearby Barangay Kauswagan in the day's lunch. Orlando Bilog and Bernadine Jovero, Inquirer Mindanao

YOUNG talents exhibit their expertise when a green-flaming lantern during the "Sibiraj" Festival in San Fernando City in La Union. MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

Spectacle of lights at Poro Point

By Frank Cimatu
Inquirer Northern Luzon

SAN FERNANDO CITY—Residents were treated to a spectacle of lights at Poro Point on Saturday night, with about 200 boats and rafts lit in different colors floating near the shore, 600 sky lanterns ascending up with them and multiple with a fireworks display.

The launching of lighted floating vessels meant to illuminate Poro Point as a tourist magnet for La Union, said officials of the Poro Convention and Investment Authority (PCIA), the event's organizer.

"Sibiraj" means sea lanterns and although the moon was in its first quarter, it was an auspicious start for the event.

Some were designed like fish, mermaids and the Poro Point lighthouse.

There were accompanied by more than 300 boats (motorized outrigger boats) of local fishermen, lit by hurricane and battery lamps.

Sky lanterns in green, red, blue, pink, orange, red and white were released. Although rain poured on Friday night, the sky was clear on Saturday with the wind going east to west.

The luminous wave sold for P1,500 for individuals and P5,000 for institutional clients. Proceeds from the sale went to General Eulogio, which would build houses in the fishing villages at Poro Point, PCIA officials said.

Slain Bombo Radyo driver also fed news reports to network

By Aquilino Q. Pimentel Jr.
Inquirer Mindanao

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A driver of a radio station, who sometimes acted (thanks to) reporter, was gunned down yesterday by four soldiers (who) were riding on motorcycles in Koronadal City in South Cotabato.

Bernard "Juji" Palma, 31, a driver of Bombo Radyo for the past five years, was attacked while waiting for another reporter, Fey Lapsis, inside an Isuzu D-Max pickup truck outside the South Cotabato Provincial Hospital at 5 a.m.

Palma died from four bullet wounds, police said. He received the "ground assistance" report for the radio station, according to a colleague, Dodi Aventura.

Waiting for reporter

Aventura said Palma sat at the driver's seat when he saw the white Lexpatrol van inside the hospital to gather news. "We have an idea (or whether the motive behind the attack was personal or work-related," Aventura said.

Police investigators were considering business rivalry as a motive.

Based on records of the city police, Palma reported on April 22 that he was being harassed by two persons whom he had a misunderstanding over his quarrying business. The two had been tracking him in several instances on board a motorcycle outside a plaza nearby, he said.

On April 29, Palma said he noticed a motorcycle parked outside the Bombo Radyo newsroom.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) condemned the killing and challenged law enforcement agencies to do everything to identify and arrest the killers.

Call for justice

"Regardless of whether the motive is work-related or personal, we are calling on our law enforcement agencies to do their best to identify and arrest the suspects the soonest possible," Nestor Burgos Jr., NUJP chair, said in a phone interview.

The NUJP reported that 130 media workers have been murdered since 1986. On the other hand, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) in 2012 "impunity index" puts the Philippines in third place after Somalia and Iraq among the countries "where journalists are slain and killers go free."

A few hours after yesterday's killing, police tracked two persons for questioning. Aventura said the police had to carefully interview who claimed to see the gunmen.

Gen. Ike Ijes, intelligence chief of the city police, refused to give details of the case, saying it might jeopardize follow-up operations.

2nd fatality in region

Palma is the second media worker murdered in Central Mindanao this year. The first, Christopher Gerato, publisher and editor of Tatak tabloid, was chased by motorcycle-riding men on his way home on Jan. 3 and was shot in front of his wife and daughter. With reports from Edwin U. Fernandez and Godfrey Mallari, Inquirer Mindanao

Bangsamoro State Government to replace ARMM

COTABATO (PT) – The political entity being envisioned to replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) shall be known by the name Bangsamoro State Government or BSG.

Last week, the government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front peace panels signed a document embodying "18 decision points on principles" that will serve as "general directions of the substantive negotiations" geared toward crafting a political framework to end the over four decades of Moro rebellion in Mindanao.

Among other things, the document spelled out the parties' commitment to create "a new autonomous political entity in favor of the MMSU," pursuant to their admission that "the status quo is unacceptable."

Ghazali Jaafar, MILF vice chair for political affairs, in a news conference on Sunday said the MMSU will cover the ARMM provinces of Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Basilan, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur "and here are areas where there are many Bangsamoro people."

But Jaafar stressed that the inclusion of these areas, plus those that may subsequently join the MMSU, was still "subject of discussion in future negotiations between the Philippine government and the MILF."

"The MILF's goal is to have a peaceful solution to the problem, and the Bangsamoro people and the leadership of the MILF believe that it is only possible through the establishment of a Bangsamoro government, but which would still be under the Republic of the Philippines."

A SIGN on the road leading to downtown Cotabato City sums up the sentiments of the people of Mindanao. The government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front have signed a document that it is hoped would lead to peace finally dawning on the long-troubled region. MARIANO MANGUNAY/MINDANAO

The MILF has allayed fears that what the new political set-up replacing the ARMM had been established, non-Muslims would be discriminated against and their rights violated.

"This is not so. Residents of Muslim Mindanao, since time immemorial, are considered Bangsamoros. That includes Christians and Indians," Jaafar, in a separate radio interview, said.

"They (non-Muslims) will be provided with the same rights, privileges and protection by the new political setup," he added.

He explained that the MMSU would be democratically selected by the Philippine Government and non-Muslim residents wishing to remain there permanently should meet the requirements incorporated under a "basic law" that would be crafted by the Bangsamoro parliament.

Jaafar said the MILF wanted the new government to be "a state within a state where the national government's role would be supervisory."

"There will be a sharing of powers and resources, that the Bangsamoro would have the powers to share their destiny under the system of self-rule," Jaafar said.

"This has been our bottom-line/long-time issue for self-determination, truly autonomous and not just in a limited or tree government as it is now," he said.

"Not assured," he added, "that lasting peace would reign when the government (once) passed along with our legislative branch of government given its seal of approval to our long-awaited aspiration."

Jaafar also announced plans to hold a Bangsamoro leaders summit in the near future.

"This will be a venue for Bangsamoro leaders to express their views on how to solve the problem and, once and for all, to have a united stance," he said.

The summit will be attended by Bangsamoro revolutionary leaders from the MILF and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), including political leaders now reconciled with the Philippine government, Jaafar said.

The MILF waged a secessionist war in the early 1970s. Upon the urging of Islamic states, especially Libya, it signed a peace pact with the Philippine government that ended the fighting.

In 1976, a truce led by Islamic Dialogue broke away from the MILF and founded the MNLF.

In 1996, the government and the MNLF signed a peace agreement. The following year, the MILF opened peace negotiations with the government, wanting to further improve the political concessions earlier granted to the Bangsamoro people.

In December last year, however, all hands the MILF and MNLF handed the call of the Islamic states and met in Jeddah under the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The MILF described the meeting as the first step for both parties to begin the process of "evolving a mechanism for collaboration and coordination." **Jodee S. Alquisin with a report from Charlie C. Señero, Aquarev Mindanao**

AFP sets trial of 4 officers

FOUR senior army officers will soon be arraigned by a military tribunal for the botched Oct. 28, 2011, operation in Al Barka, Basilan, that left 19 Army Special Forces troops, soldiers and 14 others wounded in an encounter with Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebels.

Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff General Jesse Delfina formally appointed the members of the investigation general court-martial (GCM) on April 16, but the military only announced it on April 29.

"With the composition of the GCM approved, the next step is the arraignment of all the accused before the military court," the AFP said in a statement.

To be arraigned are Col. Alexander Urdiales, former commander of the Special Forces Regiment; Col. Alexander Macario, former commander of the Special Operations Task Force Basilan; Lt. Col. Leonardo Delos, Former commander of the 4th Special Forces Battalion in charge of the troops deployed to Al Barka, and Lt. Col. Orlando Mendez, former commander of the Special Forces Training School. **Dona Z. Pazzibugan**

Smuggling not only cause of pork problems–Biazon

By Jeannette I. Andrade

DON'T blame pork smuggling for your woes, look at the likelihood of its production as well, Customs Commissioner Ruffy Biazon yesterday told frustrated hog owners who had scored the government's supposed failure to check pork smuggling valuing they blamed for their losses.

"It is wrong to say that (here) is no smuggling, it would be unfair to the (hog raisers)," Biazon said. "What I am saying is, the bulk of the problem is not just smuggling; it is the cost of production (cash) of bringing the pork to the market (that explains) why hog raisers earn little," he said.

Hog raisers have to go through traders to get their product to the wet market, Biazon explained. "Sometimes these traders have to pay for gasoline (cash) out here. By the time the pork) gets to the market, the prices are already high. And that excludes the cost of feeds."

Biazon also pointed out that the bulk of imported pork went to meat processors, while pork supplies that finds its (the) way to the wet markets. "It is misleading to say that (pork) importers are their competitors in the wet markets (of) backyard hog raisers in the wet market."

In his discussion with a leading manufacturer of chicharon (pork skin), Biazon said he learned that the businessmen depended on imports for his primary source of pork skin "because locally produced pork cannot meet the manufacturer's demand for both quality and quantity. The same goes for the (importation) of meat products," he said.

The customs chief said that his bureau had started a 100-percent examination of all trucks to make sure that there was no smuggling, particularly of pork, through manifestations. But the new directive has often inducing complaints about the slow monitoring the (cargo) trucks (that) (are) supposed to be cleared within one hour.

"I have to form a separate task force under the office of the commissioner to closely watch how our people in the bureau are doing their jobs," Biazon said. The Roxas task force, he said, has a direct oversight function over the (random) processed of the bureau. "So, my (other) task is to directly give feedback and information on the performance of (these) employees," he said.

Hog raisers recently declared a two-day pork holiday to protest the government's supposed failure to check rampant pork smuggling that they said sets behind their estimated loss of P6.5 billion from) July last year to February this year.

DOJ makes filing cases cheaper

By Marlon Ramos

CRIME victims may now find it easier to seek justice from the government.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima yesterday ordered a stop to the collection of legal and docket fees from individuals filing criminal complaints in the Department of Justice (DOJ).

"We feel that filing a case, especially if you're really a victim of injustice, should not be subjected to any premium," De Lima told reporters.

"The victims of crimes should not have to pay anything to the courts. We only (block) the poor and other marginalized sectors' access to justice if we continue to impose fees," she said.

In a separate statement, De Lima said her order would "address the recurring issue of denial of access to justice by justice and fair-

ness in imposing excessive docket fee orders of revenge when filing criminal complaints."

In issuing Department Circular 25, the justice secretary revoked four previous DOJ orders which set the amounts of docket fees for various criminal cases.

Before De Lima's order, individuals filing cases in the DOJ had to pay as much as P5,000 as legal fees, which were then used to fund the special allowances of state prosecutors as stipulated in Republic Act No. 9274.

But the implementation of the Salary Standardization Law has since allowed members of the National Prosecution Service (NPS) to receive a 100-percent increase in their basic salaries, thereby paving the justice secretary.

"(Since) 100 percent of the basic salary of prosecutors... has already been resolved... the fees authorized to be collected... shall no longer be collected," De Lima said in her order.

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OPINION

Push and pull

THEY MAY sound like a broken record but labor groups are raising some very valid concerns. What anecdotally songs workers to do what the guy for their backbreaking work runs barely (over the needs of their families? Or when their employers do not provide them even the most basic of benefits, like medical care coverage for ailments that afflict them, often as a result of the very nature of the work they perform?

EDITORIAL Or when, because of the sheer number of the unemployed seeking fewer and fewer available work, they have to make do with labor only contracting, which does not allow them peace of mind in knowing that the job is still there for them next week?

All are legitimate concerns that come to the fore on Labor Day. But the workers' plaints are often misappreciated in the mutual din, perhaps because these are longstanding problems that have been crying for resolution all these years, some even, and because the push-and-pull between labor and capital are given forces in this country that many boast the latest to high-tech gadgetry to high fashion but still fault solutions in the export of workers (called "heroes") in ever increasing numbers.

Is there a way to cut through the noise? The fact is that organized labor has largely been relying on predictable methods to advance the interests of its members—the fundamental ones being higher wages and job security. Take as an example the message emblazoned on banners often carried during labor rallies—the one that demands a "P125 across-the-board wage increase." This battle cry has been raised for so long, and if labor economists are right, it has become more of a symbolic demand rather than one based on empirical evidence. As a result, no one seems to take it seriously anymore, except perhaps for some labor groups who genuinely believe they have a fighting chance in gaining this concession from hard-nosed employers. We submit that for all stakeholders to be able to move forward, each individual worker has to learn how the businessperson thinks, not mainly for the former to better negate the latter in battle, but for both of them to better analyze current economic conditions dictated by global imperatives.

The essence of this current framework is based on the concept of productivity. But another way, organized labor has on occasion said that "working hard" is considered seen as effective as "working well."

For employers, granting wage increases would make business sense only when employees produce greater output, especially output generated through improvements in efficiency. Barring that, wage increases are fund-aid initiatives that ultimately serve to aggravate the problem of inflation down the road. Of course, organized labor has also traditionally relied on the strength of its ranks to persuade political policymakers to use things to its way, which is another limit flaw. Politicians are unfortunately often in bed with captains of industry because of the financial support the latter can provide during elections. Politicians have historically told laborers what they want to hear to gain their votes, but invariably implement "pro-market" policies once elected. This is the harsh reality with which labor groups have to come to terms.

What then is the solution? It may be this: that workers have to educate and empower themselves and learn to do their life's work in a way that would make them uniquely useful—and, as such, more economically valuable—to their employers. To illustrate this concept, overseas Filipino workers are especially valuable to their employers—and, as such, get paid a lot more—even when there is a surplus of nurses from other developing nations. Some point that this is because Filipino overseas, aside from their comfort assets, tend to exhibit a level of creativity, efficiency and productivity needed to thrive and prosper—something that appears to be less urgent in home grounds.

The key then is for each worker to earnestly capitalize on his/her unique selling proposition, as it were. Put another way, labor has to upgrade itself. Does that constitute a sellout? Hardly. It's time to come to terms with the cold truths. Today's international epoch is still dominated by capital. And labor, although seemingly on opposition mode, needs to find a symbiotic relationship with capital so as to be able to work on a productive organization with it.

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'The lady is not for turning'

VIEWPOINT

Jaime L. Hercudo

"NEVER GROW a wishbone where your backbone should be," columnist Dorothy Parker would do Glenda or Here Rob's better half. And backbone is what Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales doesn't have.

Explain salary 72 hours the $10 million grabbed in two dollar accounts at the Philippine Savings Bank (Philsaba) and ordered Chief Justice Renato Corona. The gross deposit appear "grossly disproportionate" to income.

As I warned straight Supreme Court associate justice, Morales penned the 8-7 decision that crabbed President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's draft memorandum order that ordered the Philippine Veterans Bank to account dormant.

"The latter process, by which the BSFA-AI was crafted, is in excess of legal authority," she wrote. "It is whimsical, capricious, oppressive... The corrupt conceptions that the [Reinguinezza Antibak Battery] is a state and therefore it's on the very foundation..."

She rebuked the majority for allowing Malacañang to dig into treasury entrusted from indigent veterans' farmers, and to pocket 14.2-billion lost Miguel Coty shares. "The biggest joke in his the century."

Three complaints against Corona are before the Ombudsman: (1) Padging SALN excluding properties in Bellagio and Spanish Bay Tower; (2) Declaring the value of his personal properties which have an actual total worth of P31.7 million or only P27.5 million; (3) Unexplained wealth of P24.6 million in five accounts at Philsaba and P 12 million each in BPI.

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago scoffed at the claim, made by Corona's counsel, that the Ombudsman "has no jurisdiction over the Chief Justice." "The $10 million does not exist," she retorted said. The charges are blank propaganda. Like the Land Registration Authority's list and letters to the editor, they're "phonies!"

Morales audited the comptroller's office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and documented that, under Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, the office plundered AFP funds. That included a P300-million entertainment check from the United Nations for Filipino peacekeepers.

Mandela, who resigned as Asian Development Bank job to testify, saw her ignored report blow open an almost P100-million AFP loot traced by congressional hearings to comptroller. Garcia is in prison today.

"I was a foot away" when President Joseph Estrada signed a P500-million "envelope" in Malacañan, then senate vice president of Equitable-PCI Bank Gaston Ocampo told the impeachment court. There was an attempt to assign the trust account of Jose Velarde to Jaime Dichaves, a presidential crony. "I refused to certify it," Ocampo said. She later received threats on her life.

"The role and only nobility is integrity." That statement showed in Rambo Nepo's work, from prime negotiator to Commission on Elections official. Under Nepo's watch, the FOIE recovered for the national treasure $665 million from Marcos' Swiss bank accounts.

"I was the only one," Nepo became the will not complete the task herself," the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation citation noted. Others will soon do it. "Never to exhaustible," she reminds us all. "Making a difference is enough."

Poon has made record. Morales must't earn to follow clothes except over Corona's dollar and peso accounts. Date was abroad how Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's challenge to the 1980 Conservative convention. "Ot turn if you will. The lady is not for turning."

• • •

Email: jaime_lercudo77@yahoo.com

Coming together

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"WE MUST draw the People's Republic of China that the Filipino nation is one in supporting the leadership of the Republic of the Philippines in asserting the sovereign rights of this republic and the Filipino people over the territories in the South China Sea. This is a national issue that requires the support of the entire nation, and we support the President on this. There should be unanimity of all Filipinos in supporting Malacañang's appeal for political pressures and affidavits on this particular issue."

So said Sen. Bong Revilla last week. It's not bad advice, though I have a couple of caveats on it.

One is that I don't know that Filipinos really need rallying when the Philippines goes to war with other countries, literally or metaphorical. Nothing unites Filipinos more, in case you'd sure Bloody Pinquino fights his fights, soldier and rebel, administration and opposition, oppositionist Bonifacio and self, for whatever rallying behind him in ways that add whole new dimensions to the concept. Most literally, as was seen, uniting under Filipinos more than against America—with whom we identify in ways that decided whether new classes are in the world—when we went to war with the world as the heartrending appearance we left over 9/11 and the even more breathtaking honesty with which we voiced our support for the US invasion of Iraq.

Two is that I can only hope we don't go over-board on this, as we tend to do when the Philippines goes to war with other countries, literally or metaphorically. Nothing brings out Filipino chauvinism more, as seen in the acrimonious sentiment ends since Juan Manuel Marquez broke Pacquiao to a draw, or even both fans. Moderate our national emotions, we are only a nation in the literally sense if Chinese is literally that our war with China will go beyond a war of words, there's a real worry that our confrontation, or go on, with China could bring out not very latent anti-Chinese sentiments among us. The waves of xenophobia, particularly in the social media, augur ill. Rolling back decades of progress in dispelling our paranoia or knee-jerk mentality against the Chinese (and Muslims, literal or metaphorical).

As heritage to opposite, which is our even first hatred pre-American sentiments. With no small help from our own officials, the Philippine State has nurtured the role of protector of little brown brothers making the cry of "I shall return" resound across the islands all over again. Rolling back as well decades of historical consciousness, which have seen epochs of embedded wounded and calls for a less foreign foreign policy for us.

I myself, however, would rather unite on something far more vital with my countrymen at all, and am calling for it here, pleasing Revilla. We must show Beijing-Communist Chinese Party—and all the other usual scoundrels, past and present, that the Filipino nation is one in supporting the leadership of the Republic of the Philippines in asserting the sovereign rights of the Filipino people to a just rule and a decent life. Fighting corruption is a national issue that requires the support of the entire nation, and we support the President on this. There should be unanimity of all Filipinos in support Ang Mahirap ang, regardless of political persuasions and affiliations, on this particular issue.

If China's with, uniting together on this issue are practicable coming together in earnestness. China. But the first holds more like and closely consequences for us. Of course the nation is at least poised in one respect, which is in its belief that Corona has stonewalled for 40 for the position of chief justice, if it all the was on from the very start. The camera uniformly show his most-vociferous plummeting to eye-popping lows. A thing Media Mongrel assholes in P-Noy's relentless hunting of Corona, but which real-ity cues to Corona's relentless struggle to be the pure, is he lows, despite mounting evidence of late that augmented conduct in his political and personal life. Me, mean-several, unpopularity is an oblique endorsement of the President's crusade against corruption, but we need more distinct expression of it.

This is beyond politics, or should be. Yes, may not agree with government in other respects—I myself disagree with its policy of helping to propagate the myth of "special relations," as shown by the Robinson rapes case and the Mejoral Basa. But P-Noy's approach—for now, may not disagree with this one. Nothing could be more vital. And nothing could be more galling than the supposition that P-Noy is fighting corruption only to get back at Corona or to hide his inadequacies in cutting poverty. He indeed needs to fight it for all involved, not to remotely having made huge strides in that direction. If there is anything just about the P-Noy administration, it is its fight against corruption. If there is any way the P-Noy administration is waging that we can rally behind and support, now more than ever, it is its war to push corruption to the sea.

I have no cosmic with an explosion of support for government in this respect. In fact my only caveat, and a quite unsubstantial one, is one not doing it. He will not have an opponent, any like this again. No president has dared do this before. And none ever. And no president will dare do this again, certainly not if Corona is acquitted. And Arroyo escapes prosecution. How many opportunities are we going to get? How many times are we going to have a president who is not hamstrung by political ambition and who has the power to do something truly valuable for the country at a time simply because it is the right thing to do?

Some ways are worth expending blood, sweat and tears for more than others.

Encouraging indicators

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

MY REGULAR readers would know that I like to assess the state of our economy via the PTRR test, my taxonomy for prices (prices), tradables (jobs) and rare (income). Of the three, the first is the one most frequently mentioned by the government incumbent. The other two are measured every quarter, and the last jobs data were for January 2012, while the last income/expenditure data were for the end of 2011. While the first quarter of 2012 is initiated so, the corresponding growth data won't be out for another month.

So here are we doing lately on the PTRR test? Based on the latest available data, prices have remained down, which is good news so far. From an average annual increase of 4.4 percent last year, prices last March rose by just 2.6 percent over March 2011. What's even better news is that food prices only rose 1.6 percent. The average for the first three months of the year so far is 3.1 percent (2.8 percent for food), showing that (1) we're being generally better than last year, and (2) price increases have so far been on a slowing trend.

Still, this slowdown hold? Let's see. The main things that drive prices are oil prices, the foreign exchange rate, wage rates, and agricultural productivity (especially as affected by weather and typhoons). Food supplies, actions by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) on the supply of money (a situation over which monetary policy also influences investments in overall prices. While oil prices were up in past months, they are now on a downward trend. The appreciation of the peso has also been the big economic where winter heating requirements are the major driver of seasonal oil price movements. The peso has been steady lately, and I even detect a mild movement in the other direction. The recent wage adjustments may lead to some uptick in prices, but not enough to offset the trend that given the wage rate adjustments that have been coming in—indeed to the dissatisfaction of many in the labor arena. There is an El Niño drought this year, so any disruptions in farm production would be limited. And BSP has been doing such an exemplary job on monetary policy lately that it would be the last reason I would expect for price increases to pick up.

What about jobs? The last two quarters' data have in fact been quite positive. As of the January 2012 survey, our economy had generated more than 1 million new jobs over the preceding year—227,000 of them coming from agriculture. (Note that an average of 1 million new workers join the labor force every year.) The corresponding numbers last year were only 290,000 total new jobs, with 152,000 coming from agriculture, telling us that there has been a dramatic improvement over the past year. (Last October's data were even more encouraging: over 2 million jobs were generated between October 2010 and October 2011, with agriculture contributing almost 600,000. (Note that the October and January data are not directly comparable due to seasonality.) It is also welcome news that the underemployment rate—measuring those workers who indicate that their jobs are not working enough—has declined from 18.4 to 16.8 percent, suggesting that there has been some improvement in job quality as well.

On the last indicator (this or income), equivalent to rules of output or total production), it's still the 2011 slowdown of 6.00 (month to 3.7 percent (March 7 percent to 10.0% (last income). the latest news. While that was somewhat worse when it came, I must disabuse the minds of some careless observers (particularly those not fond of our current leaders) that the lower GDP growth rate meant that the economic went down, or that overall income and output fell. It did not. People tend to be confused between growth rates and actual levels. The economy continued to grow, and at a considerable margin over the rate of our population growth (around 1 percent. So as President Noli Kumar used to say, the lifeboat grew by more than the number of people who were in it. Still, there remains the challenge of doing that lifeboat—more equitably so that everyone can indeed have a bigger piece. President Aquino, his Cabinet and our lawmakers have much homework to do on this. To be fair, however, all of us have a role to play in pursuing a more focused and deliberate direction of our economy so that the rising tide will lift all boats, as they say.

Beyond PTRR, I see more encouraging details in the latest reports. I have been welcoming here private domestic investment has made a clear break from the past decade's sluggishness, notwithstanding the decline in foreign direct investments (FDI) reduced by recession difficulties overseas. But the recovery FDI is poised to rebound with a vengeance: the data show a record increase in FDI approvals not seen since 1996. Another annual indicator is the 12.6 percent rise in industrial electrical consumption, investing a 1.3 percent drop last year—suggesting that industrial activity indeed got a big rebound particularly encouraging are the hefty 20.6 percent jump in tax revenues in February. Even after netting out the hungry P4.9 billion in tax collections from the Reno Bonds booked in February, the jump was still an impressive 19.9 percent. It seems that the increase in tax collections is thus after the taxation programs is finally bearing fruit. And at overall terms higher revenue collection means more funds to provide for basic needs and propel further economic growth.

My PTRR test yields two out of three items as good news—and with the above and more bits of good news space constraints keep me from mentioning, the third appears to be looking up as well. Encouraging indicators indeed.

* * *

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Breakthroughs and displacement

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A MAJOR breakthrough after decades of negotiations for peace in Mindanao is the joint issuance of a "declaration of principles" by the negotiating panel of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and that of the Philippine government.

Both sides were quick to point out that this far was just "preliminary" and that the final agreement may contain either "key points" that could come up in the course of future negotiations. But this is a positive step, and it is to be hoped that no thorny issues, "sticking points" that had been holding up consensus in previous sessions.

For starters, it said the parties—actually only the Philippine government for the MILF has been the principal proponent of the "Bangsamoro" identity—"recognize and respect the identities and the legitimate grievances and claims of the Bangsamoro people." The statement puts the expectations on the right footing, puts the other hotseat thetic detailing historical wrongs.

The MILF and the government panels also established that "the Bangsamoro people" with both agreeing to work for the creation of a "new autonomous political entity" to take the place of the autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Although from this first step to the consideration, transition and implementation of the new political entity, there is quite a long road to bridge, including the possibility of a referendum among the affected population.

This may explain why another previous calls for a "transition period" and the "institution of transitional mechanisms" to work on the links leading to the creation of the entity to replace the ARMM.

BOTH substantial agreements follow, specifically only on "power-sharing and wealth-sharing" between the national government and the new political entity which I understand will fall somewhere between the present "autonomous" status" and the ARMM in its present composition. Already on the list are the "matters reserved for the competence" of the national government, including defense, foreign policy, monetary policy, and international trade.

A particular head of the MILF side has been the insistence put on the fiscal autonomy and economic independence of even an "autonomous region" such as ARMM, which is why one of the agreed points was the power of the new political entity "to create its own sources of revenue, subject to limitations as may be mutually agreed upon," and to have a just share of the revenues generated through "exploration, development or utilization" of natural resources within the boundaries of the new political entity.

Certain matters, though, both entire and details on. One is the provision calling for "strengthening" the Shari'ah courts and expanding their jurisdiction. This has implications on the legal status of non-Muslims living within the boundaries of the Bangsamoro entity, and the interpretation of laws as regard the human rights of women, specifically sexual and reproductive rights. Will women's voices be included and represented in crafting the legal boundaries of the Shari'ah courts?

In the listing of rights beyond the basic rights enjoyed by all citizens of the Republic, though, both parties included the "right of women to meaningful political participation, and protection from all forms of violence." This is a hopeful sign, and could augur a more equal status for women under the new Bangsamoro entity, which should be a selling point for any agreement forthcoming.

* * *

THE promising breakthrough in the peace talks is certainly welcome and much-needed, given the terrible impact that decades of fighting and displacement have had on the people of Mindanao.

A study "Violence Conflicts and Displacement in Central Mindanao: Challenges for Recovery and Development," reveals that between 2000 and 2010 four in every 10 households in the provinces in Central Mindanao experienced displacement. This comes to a total of nearly 1 million people forced to abandon their homes over the past 10 years. Displacement in the families was displaced two or more times, and one in 10 forced to leave their homes up to five times during the same period.

Displacement has resulted in "interrupted" lives, including the loss or interruption of livelihoods (this is also reflected in the economic status of entire communities, and on the health and education status of families as well.

"These concerns do not necessarily end with the return of displaced individuals to their places of origin," added the study, funded by the World Bank and the United Nations World Food Program (WFP).

"Violent Conflicts and Displacement in Central Mindanao" was based on a survey conducted in late 2010 with 2,709 randomly selected households from a total of 221 barangays in five provinces: Davao del Norte and Maguindanao in the ARMM, as well as Lanao del Norte, North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat.

* * *

DISPLACEMENT of families and communities is rooted in violence, whether nationwide between rebel groups and the military, or clan wars or other conflict or rido. Indeed, the study found that displaced families have been "frequently exposed to violence."

But it's not just the "bakwits" (local slang for evacuees) who feel the stresses of displacement. Host communities also experience stress, with additional financial costs, such as the burden of having to resort to selling goods or assets to provide food and support for the people initially relatives they were sheltering.

Of the area surveyed, Maguindanao seemed to be the most displaced province, with almost 82 percent of all households in the area affected by displacement due not only to violent conflict but also to weather-related disasters.

Tellingly, respondents said the signing of a peace agreement was among the critical interventions necessary to bring an end to their interrupted lives.

Fight for this cause

IT'S beyond doubt that China is Asia's greatest economy...and its biggest bully.

The "respect" shown toward China by other Asian claimants to the Spratly Islands, which include our immediate neighbors, is mainly a function of business. China is, after all, one of their top trading partners.

And for export-oriented economies like Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan and Viet

nam, it really will be bad business to jeopardize their relationship with China over a relatively

COMMENTARY

Art Villanueva

sufficient cause.

This "respect" shown by four of the six Spratly claimants manifests itself in their resounding silence vis-à-vis China's bullying, in contrast to the Philippines' very loud defiance.

It's also probably caused by their second military calculation that China, despite its loud mouth and its "powerful" navy and air force, will be unable to project military power for any meaningful period of time in the Spratlys without losing the prospect of a relatively small battle against a small force of other claimants shored by the United States.

China's shaky geopolitical, economic and naval situation makes perfect sense in this regard. It is land-locked Philippines and the four other Spratly claimants by military means.

When dealing from overwhelming military strength, China has shown no compunction in pushing its weight around. It did so in March 1988 against Vietnam during the Johnson South Reef skirmishes and in 1995 when it quickly seized Mischief Reef from the Philippines.

Why is China, which is more militarily powerful today not pushing its weight around? Why has no battle fleet consisting of missile-armed destroyers, frigates and submarines from the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) sailed to and the Spratly Islands to defend China's claim?

It's because China's political leadership remains well-aware that it is not according to its clock. Militarily, that clock is very much limited.

Lesson of lure

Kalayaan is located some 1,000 nautical miles from the city of Zhanjiang in the mainland province of Guangdong. It's a 48-hour sea ride. This flies of some 40 destroyers, frigates and diesel-electric submarines will be our blade for in the West Philippine Sea.

It will take a PLAN battle fleet about two days traveling at 20 knots to reach Kalayaan from Zhanjiang. But it will take weeks to many months for supply ships for our...reverse than the United States will certainly discover using its sophisticated reconnaissance assets.

Granting China's disregard of diplomatic protests from the Philippines, the United States and the rest of the world as its naval training, the time it will have lost in political maneuvering will give other claimants the time to prepare for the worse.

A naval battle will not be the goal of this show of force by the Philippines and its allied claimants. The presence of a united battle front and the will to fight should be enough to deter PLAN from opening a naval battle.

After all, only its overwhelming PLAN naval victory will suffice. Anything less will amount to a tremendous loss of face for China, both at home and abroad. The damage to its economy will be incalculable.

A long naval battle or, worse, a naval defeat, may lead to a train of events that can hasten the end of the communist dictatorship in China. It will certainly lead to a debilitating trade embargo by and against China. Its economy will shrink. Taiwan and Chinese Muslim separatists will find the ideal opportunity.

Human shield?

The irony of the situation is that China will be unable to send a massive naval force to seize targets in the Spratlys without attempting the destruction of United States forces. It will be compelled to deploy a much smaller force, one capable of hosting to but not large enough to trigger a response from the US Navy.

What we have, therefore, is a Mexican standoff.

In a three-sided Mexican standoff, it is the side that draws first that loses. In a standoff involving a coalition of claimants and United States and China, it will be smarter for China to fire first.

If China does shoot at or first with the US Navy within an exact striking range, will America step out of the fight and risk losing its credibility as the Superpower? And if China decides to fire at the mighty US Navy first, it will give one remaining lure to the Philippines.

China does not have enough operational aircraft carriers. The American has 10 operational Nimitz-class supercarriers.

China will never allow us to shoot first because that will increase our chances of victory. Therefore, it will have more to lose than gain if it encounter the shooting stands in any thing important to the Philippines.

It is left to continue its strategy of creeping encroachment that has not paid dividends since 1995. It might seize a few islets to convince itself of the value of this strategy, but as long as no claimant plants its flag on any disputed islet, as Vietnam did in 1988, there will be no war over Kalayaan.

The Philippines has a lure that China cannot resist. Our current word war, but China will not be provoked because it has appraised the fatal consequences of military action to its long-term economic recovery, and its growing political instability fueled by a massive income gap between the rich and the rest.

Rallying world opinion

By continuing to resist in many manners China's bullying, the Philippines will be playing its best card.

We must keep China's bullying on the front burner of world opinion and the international news media. Like an evil vampire, China will die only when it drinks the world is not watching. But it cannot drink the world's blood if the international scrutiny it may be forced to back off and halt in the darkness.

Filipino bloggers, Netizens, e-mailers, YouTube-ers, hackers, social media fans, texters, Tweeters and the other tech-savvy among us can help keep China or her be opening as an international cyber-guerrilla force aimed at debunking the 10 million-dash-line claim and the bases of the world's alone the Philippines' righteous claim that has been upheld by the United Nations.

The aim? To rally the world to our cause. And President Aquino is to be commended for taking the course of exile. We must support him.

The fight of the Internet has given ordinary Filipinos the very means of proving their patriotism. Just by tooling it's smiling or thumbs-ing, each one of us can tell dozens...hundreds!...of other people worldwide that the Philippines is on the right in this Mexican standoff.

We have a great advantage over the Chinese in this cyber-fight: We speak English much better than they do. And we do not and make friends a lot.

Taking this fight to cyberspace will help diminish the prospect of a war in the air and world by forcing China to keep debating it has aggressive intentions. And that campaign may not compel it to keep pointing to the world that it will not resort a war over the Spratlys.

It's a clever bad and fantastic assumption, but stranger political events have occurred. Remember the obscure flash vendor from Tunisia who sparked the Arab Spring?

A regular contributor to the Inquirer, Art Villanueva has written about national defense issues and wars involving the Philippines. He is the Philippines' Korean War historian until his Korean War website at www.pvfwk.blogspot.com.

The new roadblock to prosperity

THE RISING incidence of climate-related natural disasters will be a key concern at the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, opening in Rio de Janeiro in June. The report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change links more intense rainfall and more extreme temperatures worldwide with carbon emissions and manmade climate change. This scientific evidence means that it is no longer enough for affected countries to mop up after a disaster. Future wealth's economies together must turn off the tap.

The incidence of extreme climate and weather events has been rising sharply in recent decades throughout the world. The Philippines, and indeed much of Asia, have been especially hard hit with the loss of many lives and economic damage. Climate science is careful not to attribute a particular extreme event to climate change. Increased and related increase in temperatures. But this accumulating evidence does point to more extreme precipitation, even if the averages do not show more change.

In the Philippines and other countries in the region governments are making progress in preparing and developing early warning systems and engineering disaster response. But overall damage is still aggravated by rising populations in areas prone to disasters, as well as by deforestation and other environmental degradation.

Meanwhile, carbon emissions continue to rise, set alarming rates and temperatures break records. The main reason is that current efforts to adapt to disasters will not be effective unless economies shift to a low-carbon path. There is almost pessimistic timely action, in that climate mitigation today will be far less costly than the impact tomorrow. But amid a global economic slump, climate action remains a low priority for policymakers.

What will it take to turn this situation around?

First, we must recognize that climate impacts are an immediate concern, not just one in the distant future. The annual temperature in the Philippines has risen by 0.65 °C over the past 50 years. There is also an increasing trend in the frequency of extreme daily rainfall. Over Luzon, for example, more than two rainfall events over 350 millimeters was recorded in the 2000s compared to 275 in the 1960s and 1970s. Devastating floods in Australia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Thailand, wildfires in Russia, and droughts in China and the United States show the gravity of the situation. The public is beginning to take notice.

In Australia, insulation maps predicting the effects on low-lying areas of a rise in sea level between 0.5 and 1.1 meters by 2100 have created awareness. In the Philippines, the Geosciences and Mines Bureau's geo-hazard mapping projects its identifying communities at risk from the landslides and floods that are often triggered by seasonal typhoons and storms.

Second, politicians need to realize that climate response is in an economy's own interest. The social benefits of shifting to a low carbon path include reduced energy costs through efficiency gains in buildings and manufacturing, and reduced air pollution from cleaner power plants. In the United States, the country with the highest emissions per person, smarter buildings can save an estimated $30 billion in annual energy costs. China, the country with the largest annual growth, boasts gas emissions, envisages renewable energy generation accounting for over 15 percent of total energy consumption by 2020.

Third, politicians must take near-but action on climate change can help sustain economic growth. Steps to addressing rising sea levels that threaten coastlines, protecting urban areas from flooding, and preventing declining farm yields due to changing trends are essential to sustaining future costs. Last year's deadly floods are to have cost Thailand's economy 6.9% billion. In the United States, there were more than 14 climate- and weather-related disasters in 2011, each costing more than $1 billion. While the annual frequency of tropical cyclones in the Philippines does not show a notable change in trends, the extent of damage and number of casualties are rising. Experts are increasingly concerned from tropical cyclones of lower intensity but much heavier rains.

To meet these challenges, political leaders and their economic managers need to be more aware of the vital link between climate change response and economic success—and start investing in mitigation as well as adaptation.

* * *

Vinod Thomas is the director general of Independent Evaluation, Asian Development Bank. Jose Ramon Albert is a senior research fellow at the Philippine Institute for Development Studies

COMMENTARY

Vinod Thomas and Jose Ramon Albert

A threat to children's future

LETTERS

THE CHILDREN'S Rehabilitation Center (CRC), a nonstock, nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that is duly registered with the Department of Social Welfare and Development as a community-based and family welfare agency, held in the March 25 editorial cartoon of Jose Mencis. The cartoon clearly depicted the pride children in the countryside are exposed to during military operations.

In relation to this, allow us to present facts and figures. This year alone, we have already documented four children killed and five injured during military operations.

With Oplan Bayanihan's proper and development activities, military troops are supposedly deployed in rural communities to win the hearts of people; instead human rights violations victimizing children have been documented in these areas.

It is your old girl named Rosa from a Tumandok tribe in Dumay was killed by a shrapnel believed to have come from an M-203 rifle of the military, while her younger sister Lyra, 4, was injured in the same incident. The Armed Forces of the Philippines immediately blamed its enemies, declaring that these two children were recruited or used by communist-terrorist's platoon division. Relentless and consistency members, however are saying that military armament and ammunitions like the M-203 are stored in a place where only government soldiers are allowed.

Military troops are also occupying schools, day care centers or barangay halls for use as barracks and/or posts, resulting in the disruption of classes and more school dropouts due to fear. We have also documented cases of child victims exhibiting psychological and mental trauma as a result of military operations.

The brewing frequency and the intensity of these violations are disquieting because our children have not been spared and the perpetrators have not been brought to the bar of justice. Our children deserve to fully enjoy their rights and to be protected. They should be playing, studying and living in a peaceful community and not in constant unrest and fear.

As a children's rights advocate, CRC remains committed to seek justice for these children and their families, and to continually hold President Aquino accountable for the grave violations of children's rights.

—NATIVIDAD REYES, executive director, Children's Rehabilitation Center, childrehab@kapitbisig.net.ph

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Rigor and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to PAL 897-4752, 897-4796, or e-mail feedback@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address, telephone number or e-mail address (if they have one) for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

'Good experience' with cops and soldiers

THERE IS reaction to the April 27 letter of Efrain Cortes, student regent of the University of the Philippines.

I would like to share my views on the points she raised about the alleged harassment, persecution and vilification of UP students by the military and police in some incidents she mentions here.

My sister and some of her classmates from De La Salle University had the chance of interacting with government soldiers during their on-the-job training on certain school assignments and projects that required them to have a better look and understanding of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

We must, they had a lot of good experiences, learned a lot and became aware of current issues affecting our people. They now better appreciate the AFP and the police for what they are doing for our country. Likewise, just recently, DLSU students invited guest speakers from the military to talk on the ASEAN Security Peace and Security Programs or Project "Bayanihan."

The military has prepared a series of lectures on "Bayanihan" activities and enhancements about the effort of winning the peace, which is the motto of "Bayanihan."

Further, the AFP had on the job trainees from the University of Santo Tomas, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Mapua, UP-CIDG and other schools. I am fortunate that I also had the opportunity to be one of the trainees persons and trainees of these students.

—ADRALIN R. FESTEJO, rvsalfestejo@yahoo.com.ph

A line to bear in mind when dealing with China

IN DEALING with China regarding the current standoff at the West Philippine Sea, our government would do well to bear in mind this quotation from the book "Currency Wars" by James Rickards:

"China often resists compromise in financial dealings, thinking requests for concessions are signs of weakness and threats to use force."

—ARSENIO CARADO, amcaradowriter1@gmail

Livelihood enhancement project launched

Mindoro Nickel launches a project which increases the income of local Mindoro farmers, aptly named the Livelihood Enhancement Agro-Forestry (LEAF) project. Beyond tree planting for the rehabilitation of Mindoro's ecosystem, it maximizes land use while giving much needed stimulus for local livelihood.

The LEAF project utilizes a mix of high-value crops such as rubber, banana, cassava, and coffee. LEAF enhances the income of farmers, and ensures food security, as it supports the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' (DENR) National Greening Program.

Mindoro Nickel is passionate about responsibility and sustainability in the mining industry.

"Itatanim ko, kinabukasan ko."
Chairman Ramil Baldo
Samahan Apo Dis Alangan ng Kalayan Inc. (SADAKI)
Indigenous Peoples Organization

INTEX RESOURCES MINDORO NICKEL Leaf Itatanim ko... Kinabukasan ko !

Just answer questions, mayor chides governor

I AM writing to clarify some facts regarding the article titled "Gov facing graft case blasted (thick prop)," (Inquirer, 4/22/12).

1. A total of 38, not 23, of the beneficiaries were confirmed deceased in just seven of the 14 municipalities of the five deaths. That means that the number could be higher, or could decline, if the Commission on Audit (COA) would subject the deceased beneficiaries to a previous more exacting Patrol 9 Bureau.

2. The 38 death certificates that have been documented so far are from the towns of Mauboyo, Cavinti, Famy, Siniloan, Pila, Calauan and Victoria. The documents being requested are those in the towns of Alaminos, Pangil, Majayjay, Lumban, Kalayaan, Rizal and Cabuyao.

3. It might be true that Gov. Edgar Chavez has not received any notice from the Ombudsman about the charges, but he cannot credibly dismiss the complaint as black propaganda any time first in the proper sense, in this case the Ombudsman, given the object of the complaint, in this case Chavez, the opportunity to defend himself against the accusations leveled against him. It is ridiculous for the governor to add malicious allegations routinely leveled against Chavez's critics by people employed by the provincial government.

4. Chavez may be right in claiming that the audit of the project is still ongoing, but his insistence in refusing to give categorical responses to specific questions prompted me to ask the Ombudsman's help in investigating this project. In fact that is would not be a valid complaint. Chavez has been less than truthful in his statements to the controversy.

5. If Chavez wants the issue to die down, all he needs to do is answer the questions:

a. How much is the sum of each livelihood kit?

b. How much is the total cost of the project?

c. Who are the people running the foundation that distributed the kits?

d. What was the basis for choosing this foundation for the distribution of the kits?

e. Who submitted the list of beneficiaries to the COA which is now being verified through the deceased persons?

I finally can say that in the seven towns surveyed, 38 beneficiaries were already deceased when the distribution allegedly took place.

These are basic...and legitimate...questions that can be answered anytime. If he is working on hide and if the distributions was done properly as he maintains, Chavez's failure—refusal is the better word...to answer these questions even after repeated prompting raises suspicions that he does his utter to answer them, probably because the request for investigation by the Ombudsman.

An innocent person would welcome this case because it will give him the venue to answer the questions and categorically deny the allegations against him. Or him to simply claim that the filing of a case is "black propaganda" would not suffice. What we need are answers. Whatever he thinks of the case or not is irrelevant to the case and to the people.

—OLIVER RIZALDE, mayor, Tagbilaran City

Albay could be Bicol's tourism heartland

WHILE TOURIST flux in Catanduanes, Camarines Sur and in "Bounding-sport" in Donsol, Sorsogon, the Mayon and Cagsawa ruins, the Japanese World War II tunnels in Albay caves and the Embarcadero Boracay Mimbin Bay Resort Center and other numerous scenic and historic spots, plus an international airport in Bonga town, should make Albay the heartland of tourism in Bicolandia.

See only will there be fun in Albay for sky or subterranean, exciting, thrilling and amazing exploration should the provincial government-tourism adventure go on a new, disaster-proof, separate skyline from Ligaya Hill down Cullao Hill, across the fields and grasslands, to provide a spectacular panoramic view of Legazpi City and neighboring towns and the world-famous Mayon Volcano. Albay will then become the center of tourism and a favorite destination of local and foreign tourists. It is time Albay had a master plan that should guide investors where to build additional resorts, hotels, shopping malls, etc. to provide world-class facilities and services for tourists and visitors.

Kudos to the people of Albay and their lucky friends!

—BERT DAZOL, 141 Narra St., Brgy. Ng Kabalikat, Sampaguitas, Calbayog City 6710

62 party-list groups barred from 2013 polls

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE COMMISSION on Elections (Comelec) has delisted 62 groups from party-list organizations participating in the May 2013 polls, including a women's group previously linked to Department of Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez Jr. and an association of bicycle drivers run by the brother of former Tourism Chair Benjamin Abalos Jr.

In an en banc decision, the Comelec said some of the organizations were dropped from the ballot for failing to obtain enough votes in the last two elections while the rest have been denied to register "with finality" by either the election body or the Supreme Court.

In its 24-page resolution, the election body also said the delisted organizations may only file for party-list seats in the next balloting in 2016.

"That means they cannot run in 2013... they are suspended for one election period. But they can file (their candidacy) again in 2016," said Comelec Chair Sixto Brillantes in an interview with reporters.

Under Section 3 of Republic Act No. 7941, groups running in the party-list system should be registered with the Comelec to qualify in the balloting.

The Party-List System Act also states that the election body may cancel the registration of a party or an alliance if it "fails to participate in the last two preceding elections or fails to obtain at least two percent of the votes cast under the party-list system in the two preceding elections."

At least 29 of the 62 delisted groups, which had been approved by Comelec to seek congressional seats during the May 2010 elections, failed to gain at least two percent of the votes cast under the party-list system two years ago.

These groups included Bigkis Pinoy, a sectoral party of bicycle drivers which listed Abalos' brother, Dr. Arsenio Abalos, as one of its representatives during the 2010 elections.

Critics of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo questioned Bayanang Pinoy's accreditation, identifying the group as one of the nine sectoral parties allegedly formed in "Team E" by the group's administration to create a major voting bloc in the House of Representatives.

The other groups delisted due to its failure to gather sufficient votes in the 2010 elections were 1-Ating, Abt Bonggo, Abay Pamil, Abalone Party-list, Kalahi, Kasapi, Abon, Alimuna, Anakog, Anib, Apo, Apoi, Aswang Sin, Ark, Atbl Tribal and Lupad, among others.

The group, Bahay Ya, which had also been tagged as a front for the former administration, was also disqualified to run in the 2013 polls.

In its resolution, the Comelec also said there were 52 other groups which failed to get representation under the system.

13,309 register as overseas absentee voters, says DFA

By Jerry E. Esplanada

AN ADDITIONAL 13,309 Filipinos worldwide have registered as overseas absentee voters (OAVs), bringing to 50,796 the number of Philippine nationals living or working abroad who have registered as voters during the past two and a half months, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

In a report posted on its website on Monday, the DFA said the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's (NAIA) Terminal 1 was the top OAV registration center, with 7,229 registrants, followed by the Philippine Consulate in Los Angeles, California, with 4,599, and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas with 4,706.

Rounding out the top 10 OAV registration centers were the country's diplomatic missions in Kuwait City, 3,796; Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2,970; Tel Aviv, Israel, 2,887; Milan, Italy, 2,604; Singapore, 2,797; San Francisco, California, 2,417; and Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 2,379.

By geographical region, the Middle East and Africa topped the registrations, with 16,665, followed by the Americas, 15,887; Europe, 10,662; and Asia and the Pacific, 9,641.

The DFA said 2,232 Filipinos registered in Cebu before heading their flights to Hong Kong-China.

The 12-month OAV registration, which started on Oct. 31, 2011, runs until Oct. 31 this year.

Foreign Secretary Alfred del Rosario earlier directed the country's 97 embassies and 23 consulates abroad to further intensify their OAV registration programs.

The country's diplomatic posts worldwide "continue to exert all possible efforts to increase the number of OAV registrants and voters for the 2013 national elections," Raul Hernandez, the DFA spokesperson, said.

Hernandez said the foreign service posts had commissioned with Filipino communities and local governments or organizations, OAV recruitment programs.

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Malaysia Dragons upend PH Patriots in extra time

By Jane Maniaro

THE PHOTOPOINTS Malaysia Dragons outlasted the Alaska Philippine Patriots in overtime, 97-93, on Sunday at the Fuares Sports Arena, giving title pacesetters Bar. Miguel Beermen the No. 1 seeding going into the semifinals of the Asean Basketball League.

Tiras Wade, the league's leading scorer, banged in 24 points and Brian Williams, a workhorse off the glass, added 20 and 18 rebounds as the Malaysians notched their 10th win in 19 games.

Filipino import Jhorish Calubiag contributed 17 points for the Dragons, who controlled the game after erasing an 11-point lead in the half.

The Patriots, who were later lost three of their last four games, dropped to 14-5. Though assured of home-court advantage in the semifinals, the Patriots' defeat cemented the Beermen's 18-4) grip on the top spot.

Wade is the number one scorer and Williams is the number one rebounder in this league," said Dragons coach Ariel Vanguardia. "I am not worried. Our team should step out improve flow."

Wade, who averages 23.39 points per game, scored eight in extra time capped by a three-pointer for 91-91 Dragons lead with 1:20 left. The Patriots then banged their last three attempts.

The Patriots actually blew two chances to win the game in regulation.

Al Negrao missed a free throw in the dying seconds with the game tied at 83 while Kiko Adriano's 12-footer rimmed out in the next possession/offensive.

In the semifinals, the Beermen collide with the No. 4 squad while the Patriots tackle the third-ranked team in a separate best-of-three series. The Dragons and the Indonesia Pitermen are tied at third.

Viloria vows to get back at Romero on May 13

By Ray Lucero

BEIJING Viloria tries to get the monkey off his back when he tangles with Omar Gilito Romero for the third time on May 13 at the Fuares Sports Arena in Pasig.

"It's promised," Viloria told sports scribes during yesterday's photo patch interview at the Solar Sports headquarters in Mandaluyong. "I want to correct things."

Viloria, who failed to beat Romero in two fight flyweight division fights in 2006, will be making his WBC flyweight crown against the Mexican this time.

The reckoning, however, has Viloria by unanimous decision in their first meeting and then forged a majority draw in their rematch three months later. That verdict was later changed to no contest after traces of illegal substances were detected in Romero's urine sample.

Now, Viloria seems to exact revenge and prove that he's improved a lot.

Already impressive in his eighth-round stoppage of the highly rated Giovanni Segura last December, the Filipino-American promised an even better performance.

"I'm in better shape—better physically and mentally," said Viloria. "They (fight fans) will see the best Viloria."

The 31-year-old Viloria said he'd thoroughly studied Romero and knows what to do to climb 12-round tussle to be shown by pay-per-view in the United States and Mexico.

"I just need to be aggressive, throw combinations, be smart and cut the ring off," said Viloria (38-3 with 17 KOs), who will arrive on Friday.

The 30-year-old Romero (31-4-2 NC) and his entourage will be arriving on May 6.

LOS Angeles Lakers guard Kobe Bryant (24) is shot in Oromia Nuggets forward Kenneth Faried (35) during the second half of their playoff game. •

Lakers, Hawks seize openers

LOS ANGELES—Kobe Bryant scored 33 points and Andrew Bynum passed the Lakers' first playoff triple-double in 25 years with an NBA postseason record-tying 18 blocked shots as Los Angeles beat the mighty coast-to-coast for tempo in a playoff-opening 103-88 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Sunday.

Bynum, the Lakers' All-Star center coming off his best regular season, also had 10 points and 13 rebounds while ostensibly blocking 11 percent of the Nuggets' 90 shots.

Bynum had the Lakers' first playoff triple-double since Magic Johnson in the 1991 NBA finals. Fellow 7-footer Pau Gasol added 13 points, eight rebounds and eight assists as the playoff-tested Lakers never trailed.

Danilo Gallinari scored 19 points for the sixth-seeded Nuggets, but the 58th-second-youngest playoff roster struggled to run. Game 2 is Tuesday.

At Atlanta, Josh Smith scored 21 points and grabbed 18 rebounds as lead Atlanta over Boston, 93-78, in Game 1 of this Eastern Conference playoffs, the third straight meeting only when Celtics star Rajon Rondo was ejected for bumping an official.

The Hawks, who led by as many as 18 in the first half, were clinging to a four-point lead when Rondo lost his cool with 4:1 seconds remaining—and may have cost him half a chance to play Game 2 Tuesday night.

At Memphis, Tennessee, Chris Paul hit a pair of free throws with 23.7 seconds left as the Los Angeles Clippers rallied from 27 down to beat Memphis, 99-98, in the opener of their Western Conference series.

At San Antonio, Tony Parker scored 28 points as San Antonio beat Utah, 106-95, to win its playoff opener for the first time in four years. AP

Meralco blanks Army; Kaya, Nomads prevail

By Cedrik P. Tapas

LOYOLA Meralco bounced back with a 4-0 throttling of Army Fitta and Manuel Sunday night to take Global's lead at the top of the United Football League, even as Kaya and Nomads Another Manila hammered out tough victories.

Phil Younghusband fired a hat trick in the University of Makati field as the Sparks topped Army and claimed a ninth win that boosted their tally to 29 points.

Kaya tightened its grip of third spot following a 2-0 triumph over Green Archers United, while Nomads remained out of relegation zone hole by edging Navy Patri Jalen, 1-0.

Shelly needing him in to attack, Kaya found unlikely heroes in lefthack Nicholas Bolotes and substitute Junior Muñoz, who scored a goal in each half.

The lanky Bolotes unleashed an exquisite strike from a tight angle that caught Martin Villafor off his line and found the top corner in the 20th minute, before Muñoz wrapped up the win with a 72nd-minute goal.

Kaya now has 27 points heading into a crucial clash with fourth-ranked Stallions on Wednesday.

Younghusband struck from close range after his older brother James' strike was stopped by Eri Sacapano in the 45-in minute.

Davide Correa doubled the tally before Phil Younghusband struck two more in the 74th and 79th minutes to complete his hat-trick.

It was a resounding response for the Sparks, who absorbed only their second loss to Pinagsel, 3-4, last Thursday.

Army dropped to eighth spot after falling to its third straight loss.

Nomads strikes Stallion's Alex scored

Rosales ties for 17th in US, picks up $15,568

MIDDLE, Alabama—Jennifer Rosales finally showed glimpses of her real form, closing with a 71 to card 2 three-day 54-hole 1-over 217 plus 4 in the Alcoa Big LPGA Classic held by Stacy Lewis to one stroke over teenager Lexi Thompson on Sunday. Anna Nordqvist LPGA Tour veteran John finished 12th in the money list last year. Rosales wound up with a four-day total of 216 eight shots off Lewis. She started with a 67 that tied her for the lead, then added a 72 and a 69. Rosales pocketed $15,568.

Zaira Teddyvic S. Mekenzie
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ortaez

SPORTS

Pacquiao to work on Bradley's midsection

By Ray Lovers

IF HARRY Pacquiao finds Timothy Bradley's elusive chin too elusive tonight, he'll try to lug the unbeaten American down low when they collide on June 9 in the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

According to trainer Nonoy Fernandez, input of where Bradley fights showed the American has a tendency to open up when he throws punches, especially against southpaws.

"We'll go after the body," Fernandez told sportswriters in Filipino yesterday. "I've seen the openings and I know we'll get through [to his body]."

Fernandez, however, cautioned Pacquiao to be weary of Bradley's head lunges and, sometimes, flying elbows.

"Iwas be careful of the headbutts," said Fernandez. "Bradley really has a tendency to push."

Having provided new Pacquiao's early preparations before they started training camp at the Grayseon Hotel in Baguio City, Fernandez said he's confident that his former buddy is headed for an impressive win.

"He's more focused and more intense," said Fernandez.

In his second four-round sparring session with Marlon Pernedekker last Saturday, Pacquiao showed that he's slowly regaining his footwork and timing.

Unlike their first sparring session last Thursday, when Pernedekker was able to knock in a few hits in the first two rounds, Pacquiao thoroughly dominated the bulking Boxeon, connecting almost at will and moving around with ease.

Pacquiao, under the guidance of chief trainer Freddie Roach, is slated to wrap up his Baguio training and head back to Manila either Thursday night or Friday.

Team Pacquiao will leave for Los Angeles on Saturday.

BIG Chill's Mac Hamilla goes for a reverse slam off Clarence Parmida of Boracay Rum in yesterday's game in San Juan Coliseum. RAUL BANCOD

Big Chill nips Boracay Rum

By Cordell P. Tupas

BIG CHILL and Cebuanas Lhuillier fourseed their fall for an unbeaten semifinal berth with contrasting victories yesterday in the PBA D-League Foundation Cup at the San Juan gym.

Both Jensen and Alex Mallari continued their cold play in the hyperchargers-tutored Boracay Rum, 72-66, before the latter crushed Bebe Pauhe Pipes, 100-86, in an encounter marred by a pungent melee between the hotchpotch coaching staff and several Cebuanas Lhuillier fans.

Both Big Chill and Cebuanas Lhuillier improved to 5-2, forging a tie for second behind idle NLEX, which is assured of an automatic semifinal berth.

The loss snapped the four-game winning run of the Steel Masters, who remain in contention for a quarterfinal slot with a 4-2 ratio.

"We're taking it game-by-game approach to every game," said Big Chill coach Robert Sison. "We

went four unbeaten semifinal spot."

Mallari and Jensen again bulletproof the Superchargers' attack in the second half by combining for 23 points.

Boracay Rum
Big Chill

Army, Kensei, Zambo batters share lead

RAFQA's Marcus Ingle (right) fails to beat the throw vs RTU's Velasco in yesterday's game.

Aplus METRO
Editor Joseph Voltaire L. Contreras

DID YOU KNOW

LABOR Day was first observed in the country on May 1, 1903, when some 150,000 workers marched to Malacañang. The country's first official celebration of Labor Day, however, was 13 years later, on May 1, 1913, when 30 labor unions convened a labor congress at Cine Dimanlig on Old Ferro Street, then known as Azcarraga, in Manila. *Zuleiki Shoaibb, Inquirer Research*

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Kitchen fire leaves 4 dead in Taguig

Victims die of suffocation; damage to property estimated at P200,000

By Nathaniel R. Meliton

FOUR people, two of them children, met a tragic end on Sunday after they were trapped inside a burning house in Taguig City.

The Taguig Fire Station identified the casualties as Jayrod Lance Dreosa, 2 years old; Maria Leila Jhaine Dreosa, 4 years old; their mom Michael Hortelano, 22; and Marcos Dendiz, 44.

Case investigator SFO1 Dolores Palo said that the fire started around 5:30 p.m. on Sunday in the house of Lianne Denise—the children's mother—on Mayapagal Street in Barangay Pinagsama Village.

It was believed to have been caused by a leak from a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tank which led to an explosion. The resulting blaze reached the first floor in before it was put out about an hour later by responding firefighters.

Investigation showed that the two children, along with Hortelano, were inside the house when the fire started in the kitchen.

The children then ran to a room on the second floor where they tried to hide from the flames. Both, however, died of suffocation.

No escape

On the other hand, Hortelano ran into the bathroom and plunged his body into a plastic drum filled with water. Firefighters later said they found it difficult to retrieve his remains because the fire had warped the container.

Meanwhile, Dendiz, a neighbor of the Dreosas, was outside the house when the blaze broke out.

He promptly ran into the burning structure to try and save the three but his perished along with the victims.

Thirty Hortelano, 47, the children's grandfather, survived although he sustained injuries and was taken to Taguig-Pateros District Hospital for treatment.

Fire investigators said the blaze destroyed only the victims' house. They estimated the damage to property at P200,000.

Cause still being probed

While the LPG tank was initially blamed for the fire, investigators said they were still trying to determine what exactly caused it.

The Taguig City Social Welfare and Development Office has provided burial assistance to the families of those killed in the blaze.

Police, workers' groups coordinate Labor Day rallies

By Jayrose T. Garcil

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim and the city's police officials held a dialogue with labor group leaders at city hall on Monday to coordinate their activities for the maintenance of peace and order during the Labor Day rallies near Malacañang today.

The new labor group alliance, Nagkaisa, which is expected to have 20,000 of its members to the event, will assemble at 7 a.m. at Welcome Rotonda at the boundary of Quezon City and Manila.

They will march to Mendiola Street at 9 a.m. for a dialogue in Malacañang at 10 a.m., and will finish their program at the Mendiola Peace Arch at 11 a.m.

They will then hold a motorcade at the Philippine Airlines in-flight center in Pasay City where they will conduct their afternoon protests.

The Kilusang Mayo Uno, with 10,000 members, will hold their activities in the afternoon. They will converge at 11 a.m. on Blumentritt, Avenida, Espeña, Quezon Avenue, Recto and Plaza Miranda at 12:30 p.m., where they will stop by a marker dedicated to the late labor leaders, Crispin "Ka Pido" Beltran.

The group will then march to Mendiola where they will hold a program from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

More than 500 Manila policemen will be deployed to secure the area and the march route, augmented by personnel from other police districts.

The Manila Police District Traffic Enforcement Unit also drafted a traffic rerouting scheme for the event today.

All vehicles coming from Legarda Bantay Magsaysay Blvd. going to CM Recto are advised to turn right at Earnshaw, then left at Alfonso to go to their destination.

Vehicles coming from Avenida and Recto are advised to turn left at Nicanor Reyes and head to Espeña.

Motorists coming from Ayala Bridge going to CM Recto shall turn left at Carlos Palanca.

In worst case scenarios, roads will be closed at CM Recto corner Mendiola.

Lim, however, said there was little chance for violent incidents to occur since the labor groups have been given permits for their peaceful rallies.

2 shot dead at barangay festivities in Marikina

A MAN AND a woman were shot dead by a motorcycle rider during a fiesta celebration at a barangay in Marikina City on Sunday afternoon.

The woman was identified as Monica Garcia, 29, a resident of Pasig City based on the documents found in her possession. Her companion, however, has yet to be identified.

According to Senior Insp. Eduardo Caparoso, head of the Marikina police investigation unit, the victims were walking in an alley near Pequea Street in Purok 5, Barangay Malanday when a man shot them in the head at a few minutes past 5 p.m. on Sunday.

The two were about to meet up with some of their relatives and friends who were joining the activities scheduled for the yearly celebration of the barangay's feast day when they were killed.

Shooter leaves motorcycle

Caparoso said that earlier, the man had parked his motorcycle (DM 13995 near the alley. He then walked up to the victims, shot each one once in the forehead before he fled on foot, leaving his motorcycle behind.

Investigators said a witness had told them that the brand two consecutive shots which sounded just like firecrackers but upon recovered bullets.

When she tried to find out where the same came from, she saw the two victims sprawled on the ground in front of a sari-sari (small) store.

No motive yet

Other witnesses, meanwhile, said they did not know who the shooter was or why the victims were killed.

The police have ruled out robbery as the motive for the killings since their initial investigation showed that nothing was taken from the victims.

Caparoso said they were looking into the possibility that the killing was drug-related after they received reports that Garcia used to be involved in the illegal drug trade in the 1990s.

Another report claimed that the woman was a policeman who was later dismissed from the service after he got involved in drugs. *Nikko Calleja with Christine Herrera, trainee*

DAREDEVIL ON A SKATEBOARD
A young man practices his skateboarding skills at a park in Manila, minus the protection afforded by elbow and knee pads and other protective gear.

DOUBLE DELIGHT
Two puppies up for sale sit a pet shop in Kamuning, Quezon City, are given a bath to provide them some relief from the sweltering heat.

UP campuses taking a separate, second look at security measures

By Julie M. Aurelio

OFFICIALS of all University of the Philippines (UP) campuses have been conducting separate reviews on their own security measures to ensure the safety of students and residents in their respective areas.

In an interview, UP vice president for public affairs Benjamin de Vera said that a "one size fits all" policy could not be applied because the situations in each campus are unique.

Some areas, however, shared similar problems such as non-UP personnel who live on campus.

De Vera said that a summit was held last March to address security issues, including the need to provide campuses with equipment like closed circuit television cameras—a move supported by the UP System.

UP has 14 campuses nationwide.

Last week, the house of UP president and Iloilo-born economist Rizaly David on the Diliman campus was invaded by still unidentified men. The month before, an agriculture student was robbed and killed near the UP Los Baños campus.

In February, a female student ended up in the hospital after a robber grabbed her in the head-to-side Vinzons Hall on the Diliman campus.

Late last year, another UP student was raped and killed in Laguna province.

In the reading of David's house, De Vera said the UP System was leaving it to the Diliman chancellor to address the issue.

At the same time, he also said that the university was mulling a possible review of an agreement banning the presence of policemen on the 493-hectare Diliman campus.

According to him, there was a proposal for the creation of a task force to oversee the crafting of new policies and guidelines.

"Its duties will include the possible review of UP's agreement with the Philippine National Police (PNP) against police presence on campus," he said.

The proposal is now with the Board of Regents, the university's highest decision-making body so it is a system-wide matter.

"I believe a review of that agreement is timely. It's not realistic to put a blanket restriction like that if the sharing of information and intelligence can be done immediately even without a review of the memorandum of agreement," De Vera said.

The sprawling flagship campus in Diliman, Quezon City, has its own 42-man police force, bolstered by 300 guards and 31 watchmen.

But Prof. Edgardo Angeles, Diliman campus security officer, believed that the arrangement with the PNP—that law enforcement agencies would not be allowed to enter the campus without prior consent from UP officials—was only proper.

He pointed out that the university has long enjoyed a culture of freedom and that the right of policemen and soldiers might "trample the cycle" of UP constituents.

"The mind works better in an atmosphere of freedom... I still believe that the existing setup is just fine," Angeles said in a separate phone interview.

2 jeepney robbers killed in shoot-out

PROTECTION FROM THE HEAT
Rich weather can be crushing about the last few days ahead, umbrella had every part but the thing for people who spend the better part of their day out on the streets. ALVIN S. AMAN

TWO MEN who had robbed jeepney passengers of P16,000 worth of valuables were killed in a shoot-out with policemen in Manila's Sta.Ana area early midnight yesterday.

The police said the two were part of a group of four men who held up a jeepney at 12:30 a.m. at the corner of Taft Avenue and Bonifacio Street in the Ermita area.

SPO2 Silvestre Vallejo of the Manila Police District homicide section said that several policemen led by Senior Insp. Rolando Lacsamana who were on patrol spotted the commotion inside the jeepney.

They tried to go after the robbers but the latter fired at them, leading to a shoot-out.

One of the thieves was killed on the spot while another one was able to run to the corner of Leon Guinto and Remedios Street where he was also shot dead.

Three less culprits, however, managed to escape, along with some of the loot.

The police operatives recovered a shoulder bag containing P3,000 in cash and two cal. .38 revolvers from the slain robbers.

Some of the Crime Office personnel answered 17 spent shells from a 9mm pistol from the scene of the shoot-out.

According to the eye witnesses, the slain robbers were members of the Agenda and Commando gangs based on the tattoos found on their bodies.

Their remains were brought to St. Yves Funeral Home in Malate for autopsy and safekeeping. Antonello C. Medrano and Fullgencio de Jesus, probe

METROBRIEFS

Man robbed for trying to burn house is QC

A SHAW man arrested after he reportedly tried to burn his ex-live-in boyfriend's house over his father refused to give him money to buy cigarettes, a report from the Eng'ng Fire Protection Bureau (BFP) said. The suspect was identified only as Jeffrey, 22, a resident of Barangay Commonwealth, SPO2 Fernando Dela Cruz of the precinct responded at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday. When he arrived, Jeffrey refused to give him money for cigarettes. Dela Cruz got irked and tried to cut his finger but this. Then neighbors, however, managed to subdue the man. Police took Dela Cruz into custody, pending the results of their investigation. **John M. Aurelio**

Hearing set on tricycle fare hike in Antipolo

THE ANTIPOLO City Council announced yesterday that it has set a public hearing on the proposed increase in tricycle fares, ruling also on banning taxicabs. Councilor Aurelio Lazo drafted the proposed ordinance based on the petition filed by the local association of tricycle operators and drivers. Earlier, the Antipolo City Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association Incorporated (ACTODAI) had asked for the increase from P8 to P9.50 for the first kilometer of travel and from P1 for every succeeding kilometer for regular trips. They cited the rising cost of fuel, spare parts, motor parts and basic commodities. "We have studied the association's petition and we feel that the fare hike would be very much needed by our tricycle drivers and operators," Lazo said in a statement e-mailed to the reporter. The public hearing was set for May 12 at 1:30 p.m. at the multipurpose hall in the Rizal Park and Shop Conference Center. The proposed increase is the first in the last three years. Lazo appealed to the transportation group to be patient as the city council studies the proposal before passing the law. He said he knows that the price of petrol every thing has gone up since." Lazo said, refer ring to the 2008 ordinance which authorized tricycle operators to hike their fare to P8.50. **Nitz Calleja**

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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/Citizenship	Position
[illegible]	Deepak Agarwal (AEP)	Senior Project Manager (Band 5)
[illegible]	Lee Hyup Cho (AEP)	Manager
[illegible]	Mohamed Ismail Nasser (AEP)	Assistant Vice President (Lending and Marketing) and Head of Lending Unit (Lending Division)
[illegible]	Jennifer Lorenzo Daniel (AEP)	Operations Manager
[illegible]	Roger Thomas Wessel (AEP)	Chemical and Environmental Consultant/Training Consultant
[illegible]	Dahyang Shin (AEP)	Project Engineer
[illegible]	Chan Cheong Kuk Patrick (AEP)	Senior Lead E Application Engineer
[illegible]	Hwa Kyung Lee (AEP)	Lead Researcher
[illegible]	Barry Scott (AEP)	Team Leader
[illegible]	Brian Sean Cho (AEP)	Vice President (Head Manager)
[illegible]	Ryanne Park (AEP)	Lead Member
[illegible]	Steven Dyer (AEP)	Director
[illegible]	Eleanor Ann Lee (AEP)	Assistant Professor
[illegible]	Ji Yeon Kim

UN chief urges West to ease Burma sanctions

NAYPYIDAW—UN chief Ban Ki-moon Monday urged the West to drop more Myanmar sanctions, in a show of support for the reformist regime as Aung San Suu Kyi backtracked on her refusal to take her parliamentary seat.

Ban welcomed moves by the international community to reward sweeping changes in the country since the end of direct army rule last year, in a landmark speech in parliament following talks with President Thein Sein.

"Today, I urge the international community to go even further in lifting, suspending, or easing trade restrictions and other sanctions," he said in the first speech by a foreign dignitary in the fledgling legislature.

Ban, who is in Myanmar for the first time under the new quasi-civilian government, is the latest in a string of top foreign visitors amid a thaw in the army-dominated nation's relations with the West, which has begun rolling back sanctions in response to reforms.

His address was not witnessed by Suu Kyi and other newly-elected members of her party, after they last week delayed their debut in the legislature in a row over the swearing-in oath.

But in a dramatic climbdown, the Nobel laureate told reporters in her National League for Democracy (NLD) party headquarters in Yangon on Monday that she would pledge to "safeguard" the terms created considerable.

"We have decided to comply in this manner, because we do not want a political problem or issue," she said, ending an impasse seen as an early sign of friction with the government since she won a parliamentary seat in historic April 1 by-elections.

In his speech to MPs Ban hailed the "vision, leadership and courage" of Thein Sein, who has ushered in a slew of reforms in the last year including welcoming Suu Kyi's party into the mainstream and freeing political prisoners.

"The path of change is still fragile and uncertain. But it is indeed too narrow to turn back," he said from the podium of the palatial parliament building, adding that Myanmar's changes "have inspired the world."

"President Thein Sein and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi have demonstrated the confidence and statesmanship needed to look beyond politics to the larger interests of the nation."

The UN Secretary-General, who was pinwheeled by the jeers from analog Suu Kyi under house arrest during his previous visit to Myanmar in 2009, is not to meet the Nobel Peace Prize laureate for the first time during his three-day trip.

Suu Kyi is now expected to take the oath on Wednesday, according to NLD sources.

"The reason we accept it, finally is the desire of the people," she said.

"Our voters raised fist as because they want us to join in parliament."

The democracy icon has said one of her priorities as a politician is to push for an amendment of the 2008 constitution, under which one quarter of the seats in parliament are reserved for unelected military officials.

The army-backed ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) welcomed the decision by the NLD to back down on the oath-swearing.

"Elected representatives of the people need to follow the way of the parliament. So we welcome everyone who participates in the legislature," general secretary Htay Oo told AFP at the parliament.

Last week, the European Union responded to what it said were "historic changes" by suspending for one year a wide range of trade, economic and individual sanctions, although it left intact an arms embargo.

Canada and Australia have also recently eased punitive measures and Japan waived $6.7 billion of Myanmar's debt.

But the United States last week ruled out an immediate end to its main sanctions on Myanmar, saying it wanted to preserve leverage to push the regime on an end to ethnic violence, which has marred the regime's reform image. AFP

PRODEMOCRACY leader Aung San Suu Kyi (in front of her team, Suu Kyi and her party have agreed to end a boycott of parliament and swear an oath to protect the constitution that it had violated. AFP/STR

Weaker Qaida still plots payback for US raid

AL-QAEDA leader Osama bin Laden, left, and his top lieutenant Ayman al-Zawahiri in an image grabbed from a video taken on Dec. 2, 2001. AP

WASHINGTON—A year after the US raid that killed Osama bin Laden, al-Qaida is battered and battered, too busy surviving for the moment to carry out another Sept. 11-style attack on US soil.

But the terrorist network remains a rich plaything for US counterterrorist officials who's due, in time, to withdraw may deliver.

A decade of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that has cost the US about $1.33 trillion and 8,300 US troops' lives has forced al-Qaida's affiliates to regroup, from Yemen to Iraq. But Laden's No. 2, Ayman al-Zawahiri, is thought to be hiding out of US reach, in Pakistan's mountains, just as Bin Laden was for so many years.

"It's wishful thinking to say al-Qaida is on the brink of defeat," says Seth Jones, a RAND analyst and adviser to US special operations forces. "They have increased global presence, the number of attacks by affiliates has risen, and in some places like Yemen, they've expanded control of territory."

It's a complicated, somewhat murky picture for Americans to grasp.

US officials say Bin Laden's old team is still here dismantled. But they say some branches are losing Pakistan targets and US allies overseas, and still aspire to match their patron organization's milestone of Sept. 11, 2001.

The resilience is in branches.

"They are continuing to try to again, carry out an attack against US persons inside of Yemen, as well as against the homeland," White House counterterrorism adviser John Brennan said Sunday on ABC's "This Week."

"We're working very closely with our Yemeni partners to track down all these leads," he said.

Brennan says there's no sign of an active revenge plot against US targets, but US citizens in Pakistan and beyond are being warned to be vigilant ahead of the May 2 anniversary of the night raid. US helicopters swooped down on Bin Laden's compound in the Pakistani army town of Abbottabad, killing him, one of his sons, two couriers and their wives.

The last time for Americans of the mastermind behind the Sept. 11 attacks was that of a wizened old man sitting in front of an old television, wrapped in a blanket.

The world may never see photographic proof of his death. US District Judge James E. Boasberg in Washington ruled last week that the Obama Administration, under the Freedom of Information Act, would not have to release photos of Bin Laden during or after the raid.

"Awful description of the death and burial of Osama Bin Laden will have to suffice," Boasberg wrote in his ruling on the lawsuit by the public interest group Judicial Watch.

Bin Laden's killing and al-Qaida's stumbling efforts to regroup are now the central economy counterpoint of President Barack Obama's re-election campaign.

The White House frequently cites the president's decision to approve the raid, with only a 50-50 chance that Bin Laden was even at the compound. Obama could have gone down in history as the man who put the Navy SEALs and the relationship with Pakistan in jeopardy, while failing to catch the al-Qaida leader.

"Al-Qaida was said to see No. 1 wooing," White House spokesman Jay Carney said last week. "No. 1's a part of his foreign policy record, obviously, but it's also part of a very serious endeavor to keep our country safe."

How safe remains in question.

US officials say al-Qaida is less able to carry out a complex attack like Sept. 11 and they rule out al-Qaida's ability to attack with weapons of mass destruction in the coming year. These officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they say publicly identifying themselves could make them a target of the terrorist group.

US counterterrorist forces have killed roughly half of al-Qaida's top 20 leaders since the raid. That includes US-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, killed by a drone in Yemen last September, two drone strikes after Bin Laden's death.

Only a few of the original al-Qaida team remain, and none of the new names on the US target lists are relative unknowns, officials say.

"The last terror attack was seven years ago in London and they haven't had any major attacks in the US," says Bruce Hoffer, an al-Qaida expert who wrote our Bin Laden. "They are recruiting an inspires and dead, unless." AP

Spaniards protest budget cuts

MADRID—Thousands of people protested across Spain on Sunday against government cuts aimed at tackling a debt crisis that has pushed the country back into recession and sent unemployment close to 25 percent.

Protesters closed central parts of the capital Madrid on a wet Sunday to protest against cuts in education and health services the government says must be made to help slash the public deficit.

The protests, which were peaceful, were continued in over 56 cities across the country as Spaniards grow weary of austerity measures and years of hardship triggered by a real estate crash in the wake of the global financial crisis in 2008.

The center-right government aims to make savings in its budget this year of around 27 billion euros ($35 billion), with a further 18 billion euros in broader cutbacks and education spending, which is controlled by the country's 17 autonomous regions.

"It's getting worse for us all. People are starving, so parents must because it's affecting every sector. It's affecting everyone," said Clara, a middle-aged woman with her children in Madrid.

Labor unions called for lawmakers protests to continue in coming months to persuade leaders they should act only slowly on cuts to deal with the deficit and should aim to stimulate growth.

Speaking as an event in Madrid Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy said the cuts were essential.

"We are working to turn around the situation, and we will do it, but it will be hard for people. In order to do it we are implementing a series of reforms that are more positive, more necessary and required than ever," he said at a People's Party meeting in the capital.

Some protesters were disappointed by the numbers turning out in support, which they said was down to the size, said Iñigo in the length of a crisis.

"People are not protesting in huge numbers. I don't know what it's going to take for the people to really stand up. The disenchantment is so brutal that people will not stand up and protest," said Adán, a pensioner.

Many people waved labor union flags and held banners against the cuts in the country's prized healthcare system that will add to medical waiting lists and to its education budget, which will increase the hours worked by teachers and the number of pupils per classroom.

More protests are expected this week in the country's second largest city Barcelona before the European Central bank holds its new meeting meeting there on Thursday. Reuters

Sudan declares state of emergency as clashes with S. Sudan continue

KHARTOUM, Sudan—Sudan declared a state of emergency on Sunday along much of its border with South Sudanese the monsoon-season, after a new round of cross-border violence left dozens dead.

President Omar Hassan al-Bashir's decree gives authorities in the border areas wide powers to make arrests and set up curfew zones. It was issued a day after Sudan declared three foreigners and a South Sudanese near the border and accused them of spying for South Sudan, a charge the South denies.

South Sudan, meanwhile, said on Sunday that it would remove its security forces from the contested region of Abyei to cooperate to demands from the African Union and the UN Security Council. "We are not occupying any contested area," said South Sudan's minister of information, Barnaba Marial Benjamin.

But reports of fighting continued through the weekend. On Saturday, Sudanese aircraft bombed Bentiaiu, a town near the border in Unity state, witnesses said. And on Sunday, South Sudan's army said clashes with what it called a militia group backed by Sudan left 21 people dead in Unidakal, near the border. Benjamin called the militia a "misnomer" of Sudanese forces and southern militiamen.

South Sudan seceded from Sudan in July after a referendum. A number of pressing issues, however, have not been resolved, including the demarcation of the border, the status of each nation's citizens in the other's country, and the sharing of the revenues from the region's oil.

Hostilities between the two sides erupted this month when South Sudan captured the important oil-producing region of Heglig from Sudan, which soon regained control of it. Sudanese officials have accused the South of using foreign fighters in Heglig and supporting insurgent movements in rebels in the province of Khartoum. Both sides deny that they are supporting rebel militias.

In the tense climate on Sunday, Sudan declared the state of emergency in the border districts of the states of South Kordofan, White Nile and Sennar "to achieve security and guarantee the protection of the citizens and repel any attacks," according to the ministry of information.

On Saturday, Sudan said it had arrested a Briton, a Norwegian, a South African and a South Sudanese, accusing them of illegally entering Heglig to spy for South Sudan. Col. Sawarmi Khaled, a Sudanese army spokesperson, said the arrests proved that South Sudan was using foreign fighters. The Associated Press reported.

New York Times News Service

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Queco

Chances of strike on Iran receding, US officials say

WASHINGTON—After a winter of alarm over the possibility that a military conflict over the Iranian nuclear program might be imminent, US officials and outside analysts now believe that the chances of war in the near future have significantly decreased.

They cite a series of factors that, for now, argue against a conflict. The threat of tighter economic sanctions has energized the Iranians to say more flexible tactics in their dealings with the United States and other powers, while the evidence of direct negotiations has tempered the tone in Democracy talk on all sides.

A growing divide in Israel between political leaders and military and intelligence officials over the wisdom of attacking Iran has begun to surface. And the White House appears determined to prevent any confrontation that could disrupt world oil markets in an election year.

"I do think the temperature has cooled," an Obama administration official said.

At the same time, no one is discounting the possibility that the current optimism could fade. "While there isn't an agreement between the US and Israel on how much time, there is an agreement that there is some time to give diplomacy a chance," said Dennis B. Ross, who previously handled Iran policy for the Obama administration.

"So I think right now we do have a focus on the negotiations," he added. "It doesn't mean the threat of using force goes away, but it lets behind the diplomacy."

The talks two weeks ago in Istanbul between Iran and the US and other world powers were something of a turning point in the current American thinking about Iran. In the days leading up to the talks, there had been little optimism in Washington, but Iranian negotiators appeared more flexible and open to resolving the crisis than expected, even though no agreement was reached other than to talk again, in Baghdad next month. US officials believe the looming threat of tighter western sanctions to take effect on July 1 convinced the Iranians to take the negotiations more seriously than they had in the past.

"There is a combination of factors coming on line, including the talks and the sanctions, and so now I think people realize it has to be given time to play out," one administration official said, who, like the others cited, spoke on condition of attribution in order to discuss sensitive matters. "It seems to a point now where the combination of diplomacy and pressure is giving us a window."

In a television appearance on Wednesday, Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said, "I have confidence that there is room forward."

Senior Iranian leaders have sought to portray the limited round of negotiations as successful, which might help ease US-Israeli and outside analysts said, but the Iranian government is preparing the public for a deal with the West that could be portrayed as one for Iran.

"I see that success at the beginning of the end of what I call the unnecessary crisis," the Iranian foreign minister, Ali Akbar Salehi, said after the talks.

At the Baghdad meeting, "I see more progress," he predicted.

Ehsan, the Iranian state-controlled news service, reported last week that a leading Iranian cleric, Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, did, had made positive statements about the negotiations. The news service said that the cleric, in his Friday sermon in Baghdad, of monotheism, in Tehran, said that if the US and other nations negotiating talks in an effort "to find behavior in nuclear talks, the outcome will be good for all." New York Times News Service

ONE WORLD Trade Center rises above the lower Manhattan skyline and the Memorial September 11 Memorial, lower right, in New York on this April 17 photo.

World Trade Center tower to reclaim Manhattan sky

NEW YORK—If the winds are stopping enough over Lower Manhattan—as other workers can see the whole outline of the island's top—a steel column will be hoisted into place Monday afternoon atop the smokestack of 1 World Trade Center and New York will have a new tallest building.

More important, downtown will have reclaimed its position.

Perhaps more the day, the first column of the 100th floor of 1 World Trade Center will bring the tower to a height of 1,271 feet, making it 25 feet higher than the Empire State Building.

After several sometimes halting starts, a skyscraper has finally taken form at ground zero. At first, its twin cranes could be described creeping over the flattened rope of nearby towers. Then, as the core of a new floor every week, it began reshaping the Manhattan skyline as seen from New Jersey. By late last fall, it could be spotted from the restored tower as La Guardia Airport's 2.2 miles away.

A tower has again become an unmistakable presence at the southern end of Manhattan.

The author Brad Bascomb, who delves into New York every few weeks from Philadelphia, where he lives, recalled a growing awareness that 1 World Trade Center was visible from the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge and that it was underscoring perceptibly taller on each visit. "You know, I was happy to see it," he said. "I thought, 'Wonderful.'"

From a construction point of view, the completion of the framework, known as the topping out, will be a more significant milestone. That is to occur in a couple of months, when 1 World Trade Center reaches 1,300 feet at its rooftop purpose, identical in height to the first 1 World Trade Center, which was destroyed, with the rest of the complex, in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The ultimate topping out will be the completion next year of an antenna that will bring the structure's overall height to 1,776 feet.

"At there is an enticement in this moment that was conveyed by Patrick J. Foye, executive director of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which is one of the developers of 1 World Trade Center.

"Now we get three-sevenths of the observation deck."

This is the second time a skyscraper called 1 World Trade Center has edged over the Empire State Building. The first was on Oct. 19, 1970, when a section of steel framework elevated the north tower of the World Trade Center to 1,254 feet, 4 feet above Empire State's 1,250-foot benchmark.

The first trade center was seen as a threat to the real estate market. Owners and builders fought it fiercely. Their ranks included Lawrence A. Wien, who controlled the Empire State Building, and fledgling developer Donald J. Trump, who headed the Dutch Organization and ushered the Doughty is developing 1 World Trade Center. On May 2, 1968, a committee headed by Wien took out a full-page advertisement in The New York Times showing the silhouette of a 110-floor hooded straight for the upper floors of 1 World Trade Center. The problem, the ad seemed, was an traffic, not tenants. But the ad and protests. "The steel panicked hazard in supporting," New York Times News Service

ONCE A tense rivalry, the relationship between President Barack Obama and former President Bill Clinton has evolved into a genuine political and policy partnership.

Bill teams with Barack to raise cash, win votes

WASHINGTON—Four years ago, Barack Obama warned critics of the Democratic Party after praising Bill Clinton as a symbol of small-bill ambition and satisfied politics. Now, as president, Obama is not only the Democratic spokesperson for help in Republican hostile down his neck.

The 44th president is relishing the 42nd president, both as a historical validator of his own leadership and as a GPS to one of the richest ATMs in American politics. And not those opening him as a relic of the past, Obama is embracing Clinton as a party star once who can reassure both the general public and the well-heeled benefactors needed to win reelection.

The last three days have seen a remarkable confluence of the two presidents, despite a brought relationship. On Friday, Obama's campaign released a video assembled by Clinton testifying to the boldness of last year's decision to send helicopters deep into Pakistan to kill Osama bin Laden. On Saturday night, Clinton joined Obama for a fund-raiser in Chicago to tap the Iranian president's formidable donor network and Hollywood wing of the party that have co-existed uneasily since their 2008 showdown.

"You guys got two presidents for the cost of one event, which is pretty good," Obama said, "Which told the guests at the fundraiser.

Behind Axelrod, Obama's longtime strategist, said the joint effort to show that the two men have forged a strong relationship over the last four years. "When you're president, there are very few people in whom you can share who really 'get' what the job demands," Axelrod said. "President Clinton has been the source of very good advice, and very meaningful support."

Privately Democrats praising the evolving alliance as more utilitarian. "Once Obama's out of office, I doubt they'll take nearly as often together," said a former Clinton aide who has also worked for Obama and asked not to be named to avoid offending either man. "But Clinton thinks it's difficult for the country that he get re-elected, and will do whatever he can to make that that happens." AFP

Ex-PM Olmert slams Netanyahu on Iran

NEW YORK—Ehud Olmert, the former prime minister of Israel, plunged on Sunday into the country's growing debate over how policy with harsh criticism of his successor, Benjamin Netanyahu.

Olmert, interned recently retired top security officials have done, Olmert urged Netanyahu's government not to rush into unilateral military action against Iran's suspected nuclear weapons program.

But Olmert went much further than usual—even during his American audiences in New York, he fired off a wide-ranging broadside against Netanyahu's foreign policy, saying that the prime minister was unprepared to offer meaningful compromises to Palestinians, also reported to the Israeli public and that he accused of the international community as a state-allies based particularly needs benign support to ignore the Iranian threat.

"A nation has the right to determine what it should do to defend itself," Olmert said at a conference held in a Manhattan hotel by The Jerusalem Post. "But others at the same time we salute the United States and other countries to provide us with the means to do it, to use it entirely independent to act, irrespective of the positions and attitudes and prejudices of other countries."

Since leaving office in 2008, Olmert has often urged caution concerning Iran. His remarks Sunday were noteworthy for their place and time—before an audience of some of the Netanyahu government's staunchest supporters, and only a few days after Israel's top military officers suggested that the threat posed by Iran was less urgent than Netanyahu has said, and the former head of Israel's internal security service said the prime minister had "messianic ideas."

Olmert's personal enmity with Netanyahu has increased, and has extended it is with politics in both Israel and the United States, some in the crowd peppered Olmert with shouts of "Traitor" and "Neville Chamberlain" and booed loudly when he called for a two-state solution with Palestinians. Olmert's former chief of staff, Yoram Turbowicz, who is now a Netanyahu adviser, also attended the speech. AP

Surge in number of suicides puts Greeks on edge before election

By Erik Kirschbaum

ATHENS—On Monday, a 39-year-old geology lecturer hanged himself from a lamp post in Athens and on the same day a 35-year-old police lieutenant in northern Greece. On Wednesday, a 23-year-old student shot himself in the head.

In a country that has had one of the lowest suicide rates in the world, a surge in the number of suicides in the wake of an economic crisis has shocked and gripped the Mediterranean nation—and its media—before a May 6 election.

The especially grisly death of pharmacist Dimitris Christoulas, who shot himself in the head on a central Athens square because of poverty brought on by the crisis that has put millions out of work, was by far the most dramatic.

Before shooting himself during morning rush hour on April 4 on Syntagma Square across from the Greek parliament building, the 77-year-old pensioner took a moment to jot down a note.

"I see no other solution than this dignified end to my life so I don't find myself," Reuters through garbage can for food treasure," wrote Christoulas, who has since become a national symbol of the austerity-induced pain that is squeezing millions.

Greek media have since reported similar suicides almost daily, worsening a sense of gloom going into next week's election, called after Prime Minister Lucas Papademos's interim government completed its measures to secure an extra rescue deal from foreign creditors by cutting spending further.

Some medical reports say this form of political suicide is a reflection of the growing despair and sense of helplessness many feel. But others warn the media may be amplifying the phenomenon with its coverage and numbers may only be up slightly.

"The crisis has triggered a growing sense of guilt, a loss of self-esteem and humiliation for many Greeks," Nikos Alivizis, a leading psychoanalyst and media in Athens, told Reuters.

"Greek people don't want to be a burden to anyone and doesn't this growing sense of helplessness," Even though by attitude of self-hatred and that leads to self-destruction.

That's echoed by the increase in suicide and attempted suicide. Many using a whole new category political suicides."

Police said the apology letter, Dimitris Petrou, who hanged himself, was distraught because a teaching job offer had been blocked due to a blunder having Greek in the public sector.

Experts say the numbers are admittedly low—less than about 600 per year. But increases in suicides, attempted suicides, the use of anti-depressant medication and the need for psychiatric care in counseling centers in a nation is unprecedented in the problems.

Before the financial crisis began wreaking havoc in 2009, Greece had one of the lowest suicide rates in the world—2.8 per 100,000 inhabitants. There were 487 persons that took suicide in the first half of 2010, according to the Health Ministry.

There are no reliable statistics on 2011 but experts say Greece's suicide rate has probably doubled to about 5 per 100,000. That is still far below levels of 34 per 100,000 seen in Hungary, Attempted suicides and demand for psychiatric help has risen in Greece struggles to cope with the worst economic crisis since World War Two.

Shlomo Angelopoulos, a professor of psychiatry, has at least psychotherapy practice in an unnamed Athens neighborhood.

He said the crisis has exacerbated the problems he sees already have middle people and accounts that about five percent of his patients have developed problems due to the crisis. Reuters

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Editor Raul G. Manuelo ● Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

SMC buying binge goes on with 8 more deals

Group still diversifying, doubles revenue 3 years ahead of target

By Dixie L. Lucas

(See other piece)

WHEN RAMON ANG set San Miguel Corp. on its current path of aggressive diversification, he told an incredulous public that he would double the revenue of what was then Southeast Asia's largest food and beverage company by 2015.

This ambitious target translates to around $20 billion in gross sales for all the units of the group.

Today, total revenues of the conglomerate (SMC is invested in already stands at $17.5 billion, with still three years to go before the self-imposed deadline.

By all indications, SMC will be true to its word by the end of this year as the conglomerate is set to continue with its acquisition binge, just weeks after sealing a partnership that gave it control of Philippine Airlines.

"SMC's annual revenues are at around $12.5 billion a year, so with that alone we have already hit our target ahead of schedule," said Ang, who is also president and chief operating officer at SMC.

Despite this, the group is now in the process of negotiating or sealing eight other acquisition deals to various industries, chief of which is the power sector.

"We're still in talks or buy several big acquisitions," Ang said, hinting only that they are regional firms in the energy field, particularly in the oil and gas sector, and in mining and telecommunications. "I have seven candles [left in 2012] to do this."

SMC B2

A PETRON attendant guides a vehicle to the service bay. Since its acquisition by San Miguel, Petron Corp. now accounts for 58.7 percent of the conglomerate's revenues.

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
April 30, 2012
42.205

STOCK MARKET
April 30, 2012
33.65

Stocks climb back up

THE STOCK index yesterday climbed back up to the 5,200 level, backed by investors' optimism on first quarter corporate earnings results alongside the end-of-month window-dressing and mixing expectations.

STOCKS B3

Globe prepares for ₱10-B retail bond issuance

By Paolo G. Montecillo

STALLS-led Globe Telecom has started preparations for its planned retail bond issuance before the end of the first semester, as the company looks to tap cheap funds to finance expansion.

Globe said on Monday that it had registered ₱10 billion worth of retail bonds with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the country's corporate regulator.

The securities will be sold to current and future investors, Globe said in a disclosure to the stock exchange.

Investors may buy the bonds at a minimum of ₱50,000, which are to be issued in tranches of ₱5,000.

Globe's bond offering will take care of the remaining funding requirement of the company for its ₱150-billion accelerated capital expenditure program for the next five years. The company hopes to establish the country's most modern mobile network and address service quality issues experienced by subscribers.

In a statement last week, debt security of Philippine Rating Services Corp. (PhilRatings) said it had assigned its top "AAA" grade to Globe's planned bond sale.

"(PhilRatings) rates GTBI's issuance of the highest quality with minimal credit risk. The obligor's capacity to meet its financial commitments on the obligation is extremely strong."

Amount seen to cover telco's remaining funding need

PhilRatings said in assessment for Globe reflected the company's strong through modernized earnings given former acquisitions. The company's well-managed capital structure; strong cash flow generation and adequate liquidity position; strong shareholder support; and the primitive status of management in addressing the need for improved network quality and subscribership.

In 2011, Globe's consolidated revenue, excluding non-recurring income, amounted to ₱73.61 billion, 8.71 percent higher than year-ago level.

This was achieved on the back of robust growth in service revenue that reached ₱67.03 billion, up by 6.43 percent year-on-year from ₱62.16 billion, driven by the strong take-up for Globe's customizable postpaid plans and mobile browsing services, and competitive offerings that cater to prepaid subscribers.

There is no worse lie than a truth misunderstood

THE COMPLETE quotation is actually as follows: "There is no worse lie than a truth misunderstood by those who hear it."

It's a quote from William James, American psychologist and philosopher, who wrote pioneering books on "(their) young American version of psychology, educational psychology, psychology of religious experience and mysticism, and on the philosophy of pragmatism (last influenced great thinkers like Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, Edmund Husserl, and Ludwig Wittgenstein; Dennis Algar Jr., Mark Twain, Henri Bergson and Sigmund Freud."

It is also an expression that captures what I believe is the whole story behind the stock price rise of oil sector, especially for the listed issues involved in the up-and-coming drilling activity in the Sampaguita gas discovery project at Service Contract (SC) 72, also known as Reno Bank. These are Investing Big Wedge Co. Inc. (BIR) and Philex Petroleum Corp. (PNX).

Because of these supposed positive potential investor in the said drilling program, the market got lured up on their potential earnings that their share prices experienced spectacular advances, by as much as 80 percent, in a matter of days last week.

As a result, the focus of the market was changed. It favored more mature issues or the latest priced and high-risk (speculative) stocks that the higher priced and low-risk. Most dull stocks that trading volume doubled to 206.10 billion shares on a total value turnover of ₱32.06 billion, compared to ₱9.95 billion shares on value turnover of ₱9.81 billion the week before.

In the process, the market was able to reach new session highs and resistance, another record high. The benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange index or PSEi hit a session high of 5,226.54 on Wednesday and 5,247.14 on Thursday before it closed lower for the day, but still on an all-time high of 5,210.92.

There is nothing wrong in the shift of the market volume and nature of transaction. The only upbeat with how the market is again throwing away or forgetting the norms of wise investing, and going for irrational hankering on pure gambling in the hope of striking it big in the current stock plays.

Ownership interest examined

Apparently, the market has been all fired up with the news that the above-mentioned companies are part of the oil consortium that has substantial interest in Service Contract (SC) 72, the oil and gas prospect in the Recto (Reed) Bank Basin, said to have reserves bigger than Malampaya's, the biggest gas field in the Philippines at present. As one satisfies the 200 nautical-mile EEZ based on Republic Act 9522, or the Philippine Archipelagic Baselines Law signed on March 10, 2009.

Recently involved in the SC72 drilling program is 105 based oil and gas production firm Forum Energy Plc (FEP), which is 64.45 percent owned by Dyden Petroleum Corp. (FDP) and PEC Resources Inc. (PEC) of Canada, an independent firm listed on the Over-the-Counter Bulletin Board (OTCBB) in the US under the ticker symbol "PECOF."

Of the 64.45-percent interest in FEP, FDP owns 38.02 percent and PEC owns 25.63 percent.

PXP is a subsidiary of Philex Mining Corp. (PX), while PEC is a 51-per-cent owned affiliate of PX.

The balance of 35.82 percent interest in FEP is owned by Beijing-Hong-based Talisman Holdings Ltd., which is "beneficially owned" by Alvin Big Wedge Co. Inc." (ABC) since October 2012.

In turn, FEP owns 76 percent of the equity in SC72, while 20 percent is owned by Monte Oro Resources and Energy Inc. (MORE), owned by the group of companies led by port and gaming tycoon Enrique K. Razon Jr.

MORE is a private company engaged in metals mining, exploration services and gas and oil production. It is also into infrastructure investments and real estate development.

It has an approved/authorized capital of ₱5 billion, of which Razon's Prime Infrastructure, owned largely by International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICT), holds control.

Other shareholders of MORE include Wealth Securities of Wilson Ty Lee Hoc, 10 percent; Campos Lanuza, 15.1 percent; and publicly listed A. Brown Co. (BRN), 10.48 percent (this explains why BRN also realized last week).

MORE controls Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp., which owns 30 percent of National Grid Corp. of the Philippines, the consortium that won the 25-year concession to run the power grid of National Transmission Corp. (TransCo).

Bottom-line spin

My oil exploration consultant, expert "Old Legge," is also worthy discussed with the way the local parties are playing up the "prospectus" from region's international to assess the gas field. This is particularly fearful that this may overwhelm the investing public, citing the way prices of related oil stocks moved last week.

To him, it may be true that the Sampaguita gas field at the Recto Bank may have as much as ₱ 10-61.2 billion cubic feet (TCF) of natural gas and 44.8 million barrels of oil that may easily overshadow the Malampaya gas discovery, which has proven reserves of only 2.7 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. It's a world-class discovery (as Jose claims) but the inch of the prospect is those pre-drill estimates of recovery are based on-or ratio assumptions."

"Estimates go on the high side to please the party that commissioned the third party assessment. Most of the time, the drilling results are negative. That is why, he said, quoting the republican one of the oil and gas industry, "there can be no assurance that these assumptions or estimates will prove to be accurate as future technical evaluations and results, including drilling results, could result in significant variations from those included in the report."

"Remember West Linapacan?" he added. "It was supposed to have billions of barrels of oil in place, with at least 100 million barrels recoverable. It produced less than nine million barrels, and that's worth it."

More recently, Galoc's well of Nido Petroleum, it was determined up to be bigger than Malampaya. It came out in city in Metro Manila today, and that first gave us."

He ended his warnings with this challenging statement, "I doubt if there will be any drilling in the Reed (Recto) Bank. It is part of the nine disputed islands of China (which) starts south of Taiwan (area Luzon Strait, west of Malaysia Borneo, south and west of Vietnam, and south of Hainan."

(The author is a licensed stockbroker of Eagle Equities Inc. You may reach Cory Market Rider at marketrider@yahoo.com.ph ; dcsumaya@yahoo.com or at www.facebook.com/cory)

RFM posted 30% profit growth in Q1

By Doris C. Dumlao

CONCEPCION-led food and beverage company RFM Corp. grew its first quarter net profit by 30 percent to ₱1.30.1 million from year-ago level, on robust growth in domestic consumer spending boosted sales revenue while input cost pressures eased.

In a statement on Monday RFM said its three-month performance could be attributed to higher sales revenue and the decline in the costs of its pass cash on milk and sugar.

The consolidation of production processes and focus on higher-margin products also helped improve the profit. It pleases RFM reported that its sales expanded by 16 percent in the first quarter to ₱2.4 billion.

RFM president Jose Concepcion III said Solstice, the company's ice cream joint venture with Unilever, posted a sales growth of more than 27 percent in the quarter.

"This year we would be even higher if we look at March alone year-on-year, since it was the month we introduced the latest ice cream once Magnum Belgian chocolate ice, rolled ice cream-in stick," Concepcion added that demand for Magnum has been very beyond expectations and Kinds were running out, prompting the company to make arrangements to boost supply.

Selecta Dairies's ice cream products have also been doing well, with growth rates of 50-60 percent, he said.

RFM's Strata pasta business also marked a growth of more than 30 percent, resulting in an increase in market share to more than 20 percent from 20 percent last year, Concepcion said.

The company's White King brands of cooking soup, Asian Cuisine and Flavor-Sarap powder have also posted a 30 percent year-to-date growth.

"We believe that stronger brand equity and product innovations have influenced the shift in buying pattern and frequency to a number of categories we participate in," Concepcion said.

RFM reported that aside from Solstice ice cream and Strata pasta, sales of Selecta milk, Sunshine Sun pack and Swift Mighty Meaty and Corned Beef brands also performed "very well."

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

Yield on treasury bills drops across the board

DOE may opt to extend license of SC 72 explorers

By Amy R. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy (DOE) said the license of Service Contract 72 should the project proponents find it difficult to implement their program at the highly prospective Recto Bank amid the territorial dispute involving China and Taiwan.

Asec. Energy Undersecretary Jose M. Layug Jr. said that the DOE has been coordinating with other government agencies to ensure that exploration companies like Forum Energy Plc, which holds a 75-percent stake in the SC 72 license, will be able to explore for oil and gas in their respective contract areas.

Layug cited Executive Order 66, which tasked all government agencies concerned to help "fast-track oil and gas exploration activities in the Philippines."

Philex Mining Corp. chair Manuel V. Pangilinan already assumed off concerns over possible delays in the exploration of Recto Bank as he said this potential was estimated at about 1.6 billion cubic feet—enough to fuel the country for 100 years.

"There's always the possibility of a delay because of the political concerns between the Philippines and China. If Chinese gunboats appear on the horizon, then there could be delays," Pangilinan said. "Well, it's not our fault. We would have to wait [the DOE's] forbearance if there's a delay in the work program."

Philex Mining, through subsidiaries PHC Resources Inc. and Philex Petroleum Corp., holds a 60-40 percent of the farmed capital of Forum Energy.

PAL raising fuel surcharge on flights to India

By Paolo G. Montecillo

FUEL prices may be starting to go down but the country's flag carrier continues to feel the squeeze on its margins, forcing it to increase ticket prices for a key international route.

Philippine Airlines is seeking the government's approval for its plans to increase its fuel surcharge for its services to New Delhi, India, which the company flies to via Bangkok, Thailand. The existing $20 per ticket, one-way, would increase adjusted to $270, an increase of 9.4 percent.

The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) is scheduled to hold a hearing on PAL's petition next Monday.

PAL flights to New Delhi were introduced last year but the direct service was halted recently later due to weak demand. PAL now flies to New Delhi out of Bangkok, where the airline can pick up more passengers and improve the route's profitability.

In March, PAL raised its fuel surcharges on most of its domestic and international flights. Fuel surcharges are also paid on top of basic ticket prices.

The company also recently increased "service" charges for all tickets sold to make up for the reduction in some ticket prices. The service charge for the issuance of domestic tickets was increased to P300 (exclusive of value-added taxes or VAT), while international tickets now carry a $5 service charge (inclusive of VAT).

Likewise, the fee for the reissuance of a booking and flight cancellation was increased to P200 (exclusive of VAT), while a P5k fee (exclusive of VAT) was added for the issuance of an itinerary receipt.

PAL's latest income statement showed that fuel cost accounted for about 60 percent of its expenses. It reported a net loss of $10 million for October to December 2011—the third quarter of the company's fiscal year that ended in March.

The same period rising fuel costs and a 1.8-percent year-on-year decline in revenues to $366 million.

The International Air Transport Association (Iata) said jet fuel prices had eased to $134.7 per barrel, down 2.6 percent from last month and lower by 0.8 percent from last year.

Falling rates came about just as indicators turned positive

By Bernie W. Damicog

THE YIELD on treasury bills yesterday dropped across the board, with the 91-day bill falling by 31 basis points to an average of 2.179 percent.

The Bureau of the Treasury raised P9 billion as planned, with investors tendering a total of P18.86 billion, or more than twice the total offer.

Yesterday's average for the benchmark bill was 2.4 basis points higher than the corresponding 2.15 percent set for dollar deals in the secondary market.

Also, interest rates on both the 182-day and 364-day T-bill fell by 14.2 basis points to an average of 2.350 percent, and by 1.8 basis points to 2.5884 percent, respectively.

At the Philippine Dealing and Exchange Corp., the weighted averages were 6.3 basis points lower than the 2.321 percent for the six-month debt paper, and 0.6 basis points over the 2.5088 percent for the year-long paper.

National Treasurer Roberto B. Tan said in an interview that the falling interest rates came about just as most of the country's economic indicators turned positive.

"These include inflation and the fiscal performance relative to the budget deficit," Tan explained. "In terms of the cash position, [the government is] in good shape."

Last week, the BIR reported that the government posted a budget deficit of P123.91 billion in the first quarter. It was about 45 percent of the P82.91 billion that the government intended to spend on top of national budget for that period.

But the three-month deficit was 28 percent more than the P26.2 billion recorded in the same period of 2011.

From January to March, revenue reached P394.46 billion, of which was P94.7 billion short of what had been programmed, but still 12.7 percent higher year on year.

On the other hand, revenue in the first three months totaled P300.197 billion. It was P9.2 billion more than the target set and 11.7 percent higher than that of last year.

Tan said the funds raised from yesterday's turnover would be used to reduce debt accumulated around P68 billion, including P11.2 billion in bills and P7 billion in bonds.

Tenders for the 91-day bill reached P9.82 billion—almost thrice the P3 billion on offer.

Bids for the 182-day bill totaled P6.44 billion, or more than double the P2.6 billion on offer, while those for the 364-day bill reached P6.7 billion—almost twice the P3.5 billion offered.

Robinsons Land expands hotel portfolio

By Doris C. Dumlao

PROPERTY developer Robinsons Land Corp. has added 200 rooms to its hotel portfolio with the opening of two more budget hotels in Visayas under the go-hotels® brand—one in Tacloban and the other in Dumaguete.

In a statement, go-hotels general manager Elizabeth D. Uriquiola said the two new hotels—both in their "largely untapped" cities—were located beside Robinsons malls. As such, they can avail benefits from the synergy since the mall will take care of the guests' dining, shopping and entertainment needs.

The 102-room Dumaguete branch had a soft opening on March 27 while the 98-room Tacloban hotel held a soft opening on April 26. The Tacloban property will have its grand opening on May 16.

The 200 rooms added to the go-hotels® chain by the two new branches raised go-hotels' total room count to 600 rooms in five branches.

Operating under the motto "A place for every man," go-hotels® promises clean, affordable, secure and strategically located but no-frills hotel rooms. Bookings are possible done online. Pricing is variable, similar to the system used by RLC's affiliate airline Cebu Pacific.

The room rates range from P988 to P1,088 a night plus value-added tax.

Dumaguete is known as a university town with at least four universities in the city proper, namely, Silliman, Foundation, Negros Oriental and St. Paul. As such, RLC is upbeat on the demand for hotels in the area. The go-hotels branch in Dumaguete is seen to benefit from the transport terminal beside the mall which will be completed soon.

In the meantime, go-hotels Tacloban is seen to help promote the city as a tourism hotspot. The city boasts of untapped natural attractions and rich historical heritage.

RLC plans to open 10 go-hotels over the next few years.

From the Isabans of Batanes to the Tawi-tawians of Tawi-Tawi
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SMC buying binge goes on with 8 more deals

From page B1

Up to two of these deals may be sealed before yearend, he said, describing the acquisition as having the potential to add another $6 billion to the group's top line.

One of SMC's most ambitious projects, however, is directly related to its recent investments in PAL.

According to Ang, he hopes to break ground before the year ends on a 9,000 hectare development which will have, as its primary tenant, a four-runway international airport and a modern air terminal capable of handling as many as 100 million passengers a year.

The project will also have its own business district, a commercial and residential area, and will apply for eco-zone status as an investment boomer in the countryside.

It will also have its own electricity source which will be cheaper than the present modes provided by commercial power producers.

He declined to identify to exact business mixing only that investors can reach the destination "in 30 minutes from Edsa" using SMC's proposed elevated roadway which cuts across Metro Manila from a north-south axis.

Ang said the project is meant to provide the country with an alternative to the aging Ninoy Aquino International Airport, which has reached the limit of its expansion, and the Clark International Airport, which is too far from Metro Manila.

"It will be a mini city," Ang said, stating that P6O-base of investments would eventually be moved to that new location.

The total project cost, he said, including the elevated roadway, a modern air terminal, and the acquisition of land will be in the vicinity of P2 billion.

"Can we afford it? Of course we can afford it," Ang declared.

We, despite all the apparent success the group has had in recent years in pumping in portfolio, are overcome in a concern to the gospel of aggressive expansion that Ang preaches.

There are, in fact, countless of doubters in the local business community—all of whom declined to go on record—who question the group's strategy especially its reliance on leverage to enhance its buying.

But the SMC chief is undaunted, flipping out a chart to show that the group's ratio of net debt to earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) stands at only 2.14 times—only about a third of the ratio of 6 times the group is allowed to take.

"Those people questioning the way we fund our projects are trying to make us explain things because they want to copy it. It's as simple as that," he said.

Indeed, the portfolio of today's SMC is very different from what it looked like only a few years ago.

In 2007, 45.3 percent of the group's revenues came from the beverage sector, another 22.3 percent from the food business, while 12.4 percent from cement packaging.

Today—excluding PAL—33.1 percent of revenues come from the food business courtesy of Universal Corp., 31.1 percent from the power sector, 16.4 percent from beverages and another 16 percent from the packaging business (inclusive 4.4 percent.

More importantly, the power sector's contribution makes up the bulk of SMC's Ebitda base at 45.6 percent.

Although the food and beverage businesses have shrunk to only about a third of SMC's rapidly growing pie of revenues.

"Tell me...looking at where we were then and what's now, do you believe in our transformation was a success?" Ang said, throwing the question back when asked about his strategy.

Given that he has practically laid out the investment list for SMC ahead of time, Ang has now set a new—more ambitious—goal for the conglomerate.

"I think we should be able to hit $30 billion in total sales by 2017," he said. "We should surpass that again earlier."

Stocks climb back up

From page B1

"I think first quarter earnings results of [listed] companies will be better than expected," said Raul Joseph Lotilla of Bank of the Philippine Islands.

First trading on Wall Street Friday also set a favorable tone to yesterday's trade, he added.

The main share, Philippine Stock Exchange gained 33.61 points, or 0.65 percent, to close at 5,205.70. The index is now moving closer to the record close of 5,218.94 and turns day peak of 5,247.14 set last April 26.

Value turnover for the day amounted to 15.56 billion. There were 87 advancers against 69 decliners, while 47 stocks were unchanged.

Among the index stocks, those that posted sharply were BPI, ALI and Globe.

On the other hand, the index stocks that capped the day's gains were SMC, Meralco and Philex. Manila Water and SMC-P.

Philex subsidiary PXP fell by 16.49 percent on profit taking, while other investors tempered their optimism on mineral gas exploration prospects given the escalating tension with China.

Boris C. Bernabe

mafbex
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Back to Basics
EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. NCR
[illegible]

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT (AEP)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits.

	Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name and Citizenship of Foreign National	Position and Brief Description of Functions
1.	ITAMARU MOBU PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible] Makati, Manila	Mr. Akira Takahashi/ Japanese	Technical Advisor
2.	MEXTEL OVERSEAS CORPORATION [illegible] Mexico, Batangas	Ms. Ellen Anthony Andersen/ Norwegian	Subcontract Coordinator
3.	MEXTEL OVERSEAS CORPORATION [illegible] Mexico, Batangas	Ms. Gail Schiffano/ American	Office Services Manager
4.	MEXTEL OVERSEAS CORPORATION [illegible] Mexico, Batangas	Ms. Sarah Robert Schatz/ American	Technical Services Coordinator
5.	FRANCHISE CONSULTING PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible] Pasig City, Metro Manila	Mr. Alistair Kai Ti Wade-Lowe/ Australian	Trade Consultant and Interpreter
6.	LEXTEC HOSHING COMPANY PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible] Parañaque City, Metro Manila	Mr. Yaku Liu/ Chinese	Logistics Manager
7.	LEXTEC HOSHING COMPANY PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible] Parañaque City, Metro Manila	Mr. Qinglin Chen/ Chinese	General Manager
8.	LEXTEC HOSHING COMPANY PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible] Parañaque City, Metro Manila	Mr. Yiqing Qiu/ Chinese	Operational Manager
9.	LEXTEC HOSHING COMPANY PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible] Parañaque City, Metro Manila	Mr. Donnan Xie/ Chinese	Agriculture and Mining Engineering Consultant
10.	LEXTEC HOSHING COMPANY PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible] Parañaque City, Metro Manila	Ms. Zuoqing Chen/ Chinese	Assistant General Manager
11.	LEXTEC HOSHING COMPANY PHILIPPINES, INC. [illegible] Parañaque City, Metro Manila	Mr. Wei Chen/ Canadian	Accountant

If you have any information/objection on the above mentioned application(s) please communicate with this Regional Director.

(Sgd.) ALEX V. ARIOLA
DOLE – Regional Director

In case of fire, for service, assistance, and employment guidance services, visit the Nearest Public Employment Service Office (PESO) or log on to: www.pole-potrabaho.ph

PNS - May 01, 2012

Notice of Closure of the Representative Office of COVIDIEN PRIVATE LIMITED (formerly Tyco Healthcare Pte Ltd)

Notice is hereby given that COVIDIEN PRIVATE LIMITED (formerly Tyco Healthcare Pte Ltd) has authorized the closure of its Representative Office in the Philippines. In this connection, the Representative Office will cease to transact any business pursuant to its License to Do Business from the Securities and Exchange Commission effective 31 March 2012.

All persons, corporations, partnerships or associations having a claim or claims against the said Representative Office are requested to present the same to: John Collado, Country Manager at 19/F Hanston Square, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

This notice shall serve as notice to all concerned of the cessation of business of the Representative Office of COVIDIEN PRIVATE LIMITED (formerly Tyco Healthcare Pte Ltd) effective 31 March 2012.

PNS - May 01 | 02 | 03, 2012

Invitation to Bid

Philippine Film Studios, Inc.

Hauling of Perfect Containers from Barangay Paranaque, Cavanateos, Cavanateos, Sur to Port of Manila, South Harbor

Specifications:
Hauling of 20' loaded containers with the following container sizes:

40 x 20'	General Purpose Containers
5 x 20'	High Cube Containers
5 x 40'	General Purpose Containers
5 x 45'	High Cube Containers

Bidder's Package: [illegible]

Loading of containers by the contractor is vessel will be direct from the hauler of Barangay Paranaque, Cavanateos, Cavanateos Sur, to the vessel's berth at Port of Manila, South Harbor subject to berth clearance and lighter or barge and tugs combination is preferred to avoid [illegible]

Documents to bidder in to supply the following:
Suitably insured
Barge unloaded to come from existing port containers
Must have at least [illegible] barges to handle the volume
[illegible] 40' tractors and trailers of 45000 kilos volume capacity or container to be [illegible]
[illegible] equipment, barge, etc. in accordance with Domestic Safety Rules
Type for all machinery, vehicles
A competent and experienced loading crew

Qualifications:
Companies with interest in transporting or in maritime logistics only may send in a letter of intent but to the bidders will be required to submit Barangay Paranaque, Cavanateos, Cavanateos Sur location at their own cost and discuss the contract specifications with PFS representatives on site prior to submitting their bid.

PFS will have discussion process during the submission of the specifications and recommendations of the chosen vessel.

Projected start date for hauling:
Loading to take place at the berth of Barangay Paranaque, Cavanateos, Cavanateos Sur between [illegible] – [illegible] 2012.

Submissions of bids shall be not later than 10 May 2012.

PFS reserves the right to accept or reject any bid or annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Bidding Coordinators:

Don Bosco	(02) 8-321-1231	[illegible]
Lenie Angeles	09171-800-3456	[illegible]
Sally Aviles	09171-567-3987	[illegible]

Office Address: Philippine Film Studios Inc.
19th Floor
Paranaque Tower
5th Street corner Mckinley
Makati City, Manila

Phone: 635-8526-29
Fax: 635-8541

PNS - April 30 & May 1, 2012

COTABATO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (COTELCO)

Brgy. [illegible], Cotabato City

INVITATION TO BID

The Cotabato Electric Cooperative, Inc. (COTELCO), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites pre-qualified contractors to submit their bids for the supply of goods and materials for the construction of roads and infrastructure projects for the Contract ID as follows:

LOT	BOARD RESOLUTION NO.	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT	DESCRIPTION/ PROJECT
1	[illegible]	PHP 7,123,791.00	PHP 7,000.00
2	[illegible]	PHP 6,150,000.00	PHP 6,000.00
3	[illegible]	PHP 1,850,000.00	PHP 2,000.00
4	[illegible]	PHP 3,151,918.12	PHP 3,000.00
5	[illegible]	PHP 10,000,462.40	PHP 7,000.00
6	[illegible]	PHP 1,901,000.00	PHP 1,900.00

Bids received after the deadline shall be automatically rejected and returned.

Details and requirements for bidding are available at the BAC Secretariat, Cotabato Electric Cooperative, Inc. (COTELCO), [illegible] Cotabato City, Tel. No. (064) 421-1234 / 421-1235 / 421-1236 during office hours.

Pre-Bid Conference on May 8, 2012, 10:00 a.m. at the COTELCO Board Room, Administration Building. Please send your representative.

Bidding will be conducted strictly following the procedures of Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

The BAC reserves the right to accept and reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject any or all bids prior to the contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s for any damages inconsistent to this declaration of their bids.

For further information, please see or call the BAC Secretariat, COTABATO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC., Administration Building, Cotabato City, Mobile No. (064) 421-1234 local 104.

(SGD) ENGR. EDMUNDO G. ALAGA, PEE
BAC Chairman

Attested by:

(SGD) ENGR. GODOFREDO B. ROMEO, JR., MEA
BAC Secretary

PNS - May 01, 2012

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

[illegible]

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

[illegible]

HOUSE & LOT

[illegible]

CONDO/TOWNHOUSE

[illegible]

TIRED OF SEARCHING ? FOR SALE !

[illegible]

MUST SEE !!!

[illegible]

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

WAREHOUSE/ FACTORY

[illegible]

LOAN & MORTGAGE

[illegible]

CONDO/TOWNHOUSE

[illegible]

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

[illegible]

CONDO/TOWNHOUSE FOR SALE/RENT

[illegible]

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

[illegible]

WANTED TO BUY

[illegible]

BUY - SELL - TRUCK

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A PHILIPPINE HYDROGRAPHIC AND GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY COMPANY is looking for an ACCOUNTANT

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Interested applicant can send their resume with photograph via e-mail or hand to:

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WAREHOUSE/ FACTORY

[illegible]

LOAN & MORTGAGE

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CONDO/TOWNHOUSE

[illegible]

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

[illegible]

CONDO/TOWNHOUSE FOR SALE/RENT

[illegible]

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

[illegible]

WANTED TO BUY

[illegible]

BUY - SELL - TRUCK

[illegible]

[illegible]

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

[illegible]

CAR LOAN

[illegible]

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

[illegible]

CARS

[illegible]

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

[illegible]

OBITUARIES

Our Dearly Beloved Dad

Col. Rodolfo T. Meama (Ret.)

PMA Class '80

Peacefully joined the Lord on April 27, 2012 at the age of 77.

A loving husband to his wife LINDA; responsible father to his children and children in-law *Gigi & Jeff, Marlene, Melanie & Butchie* and a sweet "Lola" to his grandchildren *Melvin, Layla* and *Christopher*.

Hymnsession to be served at Bonifacio Chapel, La Funeraria Paz Sucat, Parañaque.

Interment to be announced later.

How like a gem like a flight of wild birds
Courage and loyalty thrives and prods
Those are the weapons she used all she had
Love gone life mastering as a book on a thread
But never as sturdy as fragile as death

In Fondly Remembered
11th DEATH ANNIVERSARY

VIRGINIA "NINI" C. SY GRAPILON

January 05, 1949 – April 30, 2001
of Don Jose, Occidental Mindoro
Parents, Cabanggaan, Bulan and Cartagena, Leyte

Ing, Rene and Miranda (nee de Quiroz) and Eam, Rudi and relatives thank all those who continue to remember dear Nini's kind heart and compassionate soul. We are eternally grateful.

TRINIDAD L. MEDINA

peacefully joined our Lord on April 26, 2012 at the age of 93.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Park Chapels and Crematory Services, Inc., Marikina City.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 03, 2012 after the 9:00 AM Mass.

"I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in me will never die." – John 11:25-26

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Added Sison, "You are also guaranteed of a worry-free experience when you reach your monthly plan limit because you can reload like a prepaid user and therefore control your load expenses.

And in case you have unused load, it automatically rolls over to the next month with no sweat so you can enjoy unused load while on a postpaid plan where nothing is wasted, allowing you to truly enjoy your postpaid plan your way, the way you want it."

Know more about the Globe My Super Plan Load Tipid Combo, visit www.globe.com.ph/postpaid, call 730-1000, or visit any Globe Store nationwide.

Sun Cellular adds Sun Shop branch for Northern Luzon customers in Robinsons Place Pangasinan

SUN CELLULAR, the country's pioneer in unlimited mobile services, has expanded its store count with the recent opening The Sun Shop in Robinsons Place, Pangasinan. True to the structure of earlier Sun Shops, the newest branch will be an avenue for potential and existing subscribers to address their telecommunication needs. This new branch of The Sun Shop also features the enhanced customer service experience Sun Cellular is especially known for. "Along with our network-widening projects, we also prioritize the need to make our products and services more accessible to our customers," says Faraday Go, Sun Cellular's Vice President for Retail Management and Corporate Sales. For more information on the opening of The Sun Shop Bagabag store, call 200 from your Sun phone or visit www.suncellular.com.ph. Sun Cellular is a member of the PLDT Group.

PLDT Philippines Foundation Inc. provides Pneumococcal Disease vaccines for adults in Iloilo in partnership with Mayor Mar 'Bong' C. Treñas III and the Municipal Health Officer Dr. Jose Mario Franco Suela.

Pfizer vaccinates senior citizens in Iloilo

PLDT Philippines Foundation Inc., in partnership with Mayor Mar 'Bong' C. Treñas III and Municipal Health Officer Dr. Jose Mario Franco Suela, administered 100 pneumococcal disease vaccines to indigent senior citizens in the municipality of Barotac Viejo in Iloilo. This is the Foundation's second stop for its adult vaccination program, which kicked-off in Davao City. Pfizer's ongoing vaccination program for pneumococcal diseases started in 2011 through partnerships with various local government units and non-government organizations focusing initially on vulnerable children. Since it started, Pfizer has provided free pneumococcal vaccination to nearly 10,000 children from Nueva Ecija, Manila, Malabon, Bacolod, Palawan, Pangasinan, Ilocos, Pampanga, and Cebu.

Roche's Accu-Chek Active drops price by up to 25%

ROCHE Diabetes Care announced that its Accu-Chek Active has been made more affordable with a price reduction on test strips effective May 1, 2012. The costs of the Accu-chek Active Strips 50s and 25s will drop by up to 25% off from the original suggested retail price (SRP).

Self-monitoring blood glucose plays an integral part in the management of diabetes. Self-testing helps patients track how well their blood glucose, exercise, and medications are controlling their blood glucose levels.

The result from their self-monitoring will give their doctors and their diabetes care teams the information that they need to adjust or fine-tune their therapy.

Accu-Chek blood glucose meters and strips are available in Mercury Drugstores, Watsons, and leading drugstores nationwide. Accu-Chek offers a complete range of advanced solutions and services for the management of diabetes. With its continued commitment to self-monitoring blood glucose and diabetes care management, Roche is committed to serving diabetes healthcare professionals and people with diabetes to improve care.

More than 30 years of innovation has made Accu-Chek the world's No. 1 blood glucose meter brand.

Korean Air chairman honored by Asia Society Los Angeles

KOREAN Air and Hanjin Group Chairman , YH. Cho, has been named the 2012 Asian Business Leader of the Year by the Asia Society of Southern California (ASSC) for his significant leadership and investment in Southern California, and his downtown redevelopment that will help revitalize the heart of Los Angeles.

Also honored was ASSC University of Southern California President C.L. Max Nikias for the school's strong commitment to advancing the internationalization of education in the U.S., especially vis-à-vis our results to students from Asia Pacific. Korean Air's Chairman Cho sits on that university's board of trustees.

The group also honored longtime influential China watcher, Sidney Rittenberg, an American journalist, interpreter and scholar who lived in China from 1946 to 1979.

Koreans this is one of the region's largest foreign employers and is the largest transpacific freight carrier. It is the largest airline to Asia from LAX.

OSCAR LOPEZ RECEIVES HONORARY DEGREE

LOPEZ Group chairman emeritus Oscar M. Lopez was conferred an honorary Doctor of Laws degree by the University of the Philippines Diliman during its 107th commencement exercises recently. Lopez is the second group chairman emeritus to receive the honor after Don Eugenio "Geny" Lopez Jr. It was given the same distinction in 1968. Lopez told graduates, "Life is a long-distance race. Push to your own capability, to your own calibre. Pace yourself, but when you can, push yourselves beyond your normal pace. If you stumble, then pick yourself up and get back to the race. Persevere, stay the course, and never lose sight of your friends. At some point, you will discover the finish, guided by your dreams and aspirations, as well as by the God-given reality of just how capable you are. Once you do, go for it!" Photo shows Lopez receiving honorary degree from UP President Alfredo E. Pascual and Regent Fernando S. Pama.

PAG-IBIG FUND SIGNS PACT WITH AYALA LAND SUBSIDIARIES

Pag-IBIG Fund, the government's primary home finance provider, recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Ayala Land Inc. subsidiaries – Avida Land, Amaia Land and Bellavita Land – to make home ownership easier and more accessible to low-income members of the Fund. Present during the signing ceremony were officers from Pag-IBIG Fund and Ayala Land led by Pag-IBIG CEO Atty. Darlene Marie B. Berberabe and ALI chief finance officer James E. Yumol (both seated at the center). They were joined by, standing from left, Avida Land chief finance officer Ms. Elvira T. Lopez; Amaia Land president Ruby M. Cillo; Bellavita president Angel L. Salvador; Avida and Bellavita Land Chief Finance Officer Susan J. Gerardo. Standing (and same administration manager Raissa M. Tamayo; ALI senior vice president Mr. Rachel G. Laforteza. Seated from both are ALI vice president and Treasurer Augusto D. Bengzon; Pag-IBIG Fund deputy chief executive officer for housing Acmad Khalid Y. Moti; Bellavita Land president Lyle S. Ideala and Avida Land president Christopher D. Magtanong.

PLDT Philippines Foundation Inc. provides Pneumococcal Disease vaccines for adults in Iloilo in partnership with Mayor Mar 'Bong' C. Treñas III and the Municipal Health Officer Dr. Jose Mario Franco Suela.

Electrolux Ph celebrates 10th anniversary year with Firande festivities

ELECTROLUX Philippines recently celebrated 10 years of providing thoughtful home appliances in the country. In this major milestone, it gave Manila its do-nuts with Firande, which is Swedish for celebration. The festivities were led by Ms. Suzanne Baker, Electrolux East Asia president; Mats Fridolin, Electrolux Philippines General Manager; and other Electrolux regional executives. Highlights of the Firande Anniversary included a walkthrough of the company's successful 10-year history, acknowledgement of loyal and top performing employees and trade partners, and the launch of the new Electrolux Vivo Grande Inverter Air Conditioners, as well as, the Live, Love, Vivo slogan. Photo: Control Wall invites everyone to send their friends or

celebration photos for a chance to win prizes from Electrolux. All entries to the contest could be featured in Electrolux's nationwide anniversary advertisement that will appear on TV, print and online sites. Share more at our Firande at www.electrolux.com.ph. For more news and updates visit www.facebook.com/ElectroluxPhilippines or twitter.com/electroluxPH

Italiani's opens Binondo branch

ITALIANI'S enhances Binondo's popular and exciting landscape and history by opening Italiani's Binondo at Quince Mall in Ongpin Street. Located at the second level of the new mall, everyone who appreciates good food can now indulge in an Italian-American feast in this 110-seater branch. Business meetings, family gatherings and after corporate and social gatherings would be doubly pleasurable with this restaurant's hearty "all-in-share" servings. Bonuses is all prepared to be tempted with fresh salads and appetizing starters and entrees, pastas and pizzas that are prepared with Italy's rich flavors infused with the goodness of American beauty. "Binondo's heritage and historical appeal blend beautifully with Italiani's old-world charm," says BC Trongson, VP for Operations."

Cheesecake Etc.'s Pink Surprise

CHEESECAKE Etc., Manila's leading dessert café, pulls out a bag of surprises for mothers with the fabulous flavor of Pink Surprise Cheesecake, its offering for Mothers' Day that whole every month of May. Light and silky, strawberry cheesecake mixed with luscious white chocolate ganache, this treat is guaranteed to add zest to your special treat for moms. The cheesecake has a smooth velvety texture that melts in your mouth, and is not dense and leaves you craving for more because it doesn't have a heavy aftertaste. Each cheesecake uses Philadelphia cream cheese, fresh and natural ingredients, and sweet in small quantities to ensure consistent quality. For health-conscious moms who can't afford a cavity-inducing "sweet" treat, Cheesecake Etc. also offers delights such as low fat berry blue (blueberry cheesecake), white chocolate pistachio, as well as sugar-free cappuccino, chocolate and raspberry

cheesecake, and now its new delicacy. Facebook fanatics can feast on all three and get 20 % off from the food bill by "liking" Cheesecake Etc.'s account and just tweeting a printed flyer of Hugs, Kisses and Surprise to the cashier. Cheesecake Etc. is at the Makati Executive Center, Baesa Ave., Olympia & Bonifacio Global City (Acuza Tower 1) and Lacmaj City.

BUSINESS

World Bank to boost funding for CCT

Ranking official to visit PH to assess program

By Michelle V. Remo

THE WORLD Bank is considering extending more funding support for the conditional cash transfer (CCT) program and other income-generation activities in the country after it cited the failure of the country's economic growth to reduce poverty.

The multilateral institution said it will send a ranking official to the Philippines to inquire about the progress of the CCT program and to determine other projects that it can potentially help lift more Filipinos out of poverty.

Pamela Cox, newly appointed World Bank vice president for East Asia and the Pacific, will visit the Philippines this week to learn more about the country's poverty situation and discuss potential assistance with key officials.

She will also be the World Bank's representative to the 40th annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank that will be held in Manila from May 2 to 5.

"I look forward to discussing with the government and other stakeholders how the bank can further support the Philippines' efforts to create opportunities for all," Cox said in the World Bank's statement released yesterday.

Cox, who was previously assigned in Latin America, said that household beneficiaries of the CCT program during her stay can be Philippines.

Under the CCT program, the Philippine government extends food subsidies to selected poorest households. Beneficiaries are required to send children to public schools and members, especially mothers, to visit public health centers in a bid to increase accessibility of education and health services to poor Filipinos.

Barring more children from poor households to school is expected to help the long term to increase the quality of the country's labor force and to give the poor better chances of getting employed.

For 2012, the government has allocated P40 billion for the CCT program, aiming to target 3 million household beneficiaries, an increase from last year's 2.3 million.

The government has lauded the CCT program partly through loans from development institutions like the World Bank.

The World Bank said that as of end-March 2012, its total loan commitments for future developmental projects in the Philippines stood at $1.8 billion.

The bank said it can expand its commitments depending on the country's needs. It is also open to providing funding support to projects aimed at helping improve disaster risk management in the Philippines.

AirPhil adds new Airbus jet to fleet

By Paolo G. Montecillo

BUDGET carrier Air Philippines, operator of the AirPhil Express brand, has added another plane to its growing fleet as the company looks to expand its regional operations and become a major contender in the local air travel industry.

In a statement, Air Philippines said it recently took delivery of its 20th plane, a brand new Airbus A320 leased from Genesis.

This brings the number of Air Philippines jets to 13. The company also operates eight turbo-propeller engine aircraft.

The new plane was the second addition to the company's fleet since the start of 2012.

"The new acquisition is part of the company's ongoing expansion this year and is seen to help enhance servicing of the budget airline's continuously expanding routes," the company statement said.

"The budget airline is also aiming to increase its fleet size further to be able to ensure convenient flights daily to more local destinations throughout the country," it added.

Air Philippines is an affiliate of flag carrier Philippine Airlines. Both carriers are now under the control of conglomerate San Miguel Corp., led by president Ramon S. Ang.

Ang recently announced a plan to have the budget carrier venture all shorthaul flight from SEA as part of the airline's restructuring.

"The additional aircraft would mainly help back our growing operations in the country," said Ricardo Nicholson, vice president of the company's procurement marketing division. "Flyers can look forward to a more enjoyable yet budget-friendly travels in the coming days of our brand new aircraft," she said.

The company said it recently added daily flights to Kalibo, Puerto Princesa, Tacloban and Cebu, all coming from Manila. It also increased flights to Cagayan de Oro, Zamboanga and Tawi-Tawi out of the company's hub in Cebu.

Aside from Manila and Cebu, Air Philippines also operates a major hub in Clark Freeport, Pampanga, which is being promoted to replace Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Air Philippines is currently the second-largest budget airline in the country, behind Cebu Pacific.

Power Situation Outlook
for Tuesday, 01 May 2012

	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Available Capacity (MW)	8,085	1,762	999
System Peak (MW)	6,462	1,325	1,213
Gross Reserve (MW)	1,631	441	-214

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

VINYNO COMPANY of Vietnam and SUPER TRADE ENTERPRISES, manufacturer and Philippine distributor, respectively of the KUVICO DIESEL ENGINES and PARTS wish to inform the public that:

1. KUVICO DIESEL ENGINES are the result of a (December 21, 1998 to June 2, 2000) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT between VINYNO COMPANY of Vietnam and KUBOTA CORPORATION of Osaka, Japan.

2. The TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT effectively transferred the JAPANESE TECHNOLOGY to the KUVICO DIESEL ENGINES and to the VINYNO factory.

3. After the TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT, VINYNO COMPANY continue to produce the KUVICO DIESEL ENGINES while following the same manufacturing process, using the same parts and components, and implementing the same strict quality control procedures.

4. The KUVICO DIESEL ENGINES have been in the Philippines for more than ten (10) years. Thousands of units were delivered to the Department of Agriculture and its attached agencies, and to private businesses and end-users all over the Philippines.

5. KUVICO DIESEL ENGINES are backed up by the same warranty and after-sales service support used by Japanese engine manufacturers.

6. The KUVICO factory is ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System certified for The Manufacture and Assembly of Diesel Engines and Machinery and Equipment in Agriculture, Forestry, and Plantations.

7. SUPER TRADE ENTERPRISES has a nationwide SERVICE DEALERS NETWORK and holds regular MOBILE SERVICE CLINICS that can extend warranty and after-sales service whenever required.

8. SUPER TRADE ENTERPRISES and VINYNO COMPANY donate KUVICO DIESEL ENGINES to various state universities and colleges in their continuing effort to enhance the quality of instruction for agricultural mechanization.

For further questions and concerns, please visit our website, send us and email, or call us at the numbers given below. We are available six (6) days a week: from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM to serve you.

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Tollway firm set to start NLEX C-5 Link

MANILA North Tollways Corp., a subsidiary of Metro Pacific Tollways Corp., is set to undertake its next road project called NLEX C-5 Link, which will connect the north to the south via C-5, MNTC president Rodrigo E. Franco said.

Franco said this project was a section of the Manila North Expressway extension of NLEX. The 9.80-km NLEX C-5 link will connect the NLEX main to C-5 through Mindanao Avenue. Estimated cost is at P6.1 billion, inclusive of operating equipment and other facilities. Commercial operations are expected to start by June 2015.

Ramon S. Fernandez, MPTC president, said the project "represents MPTC's continuing commitment to invest in projects that will promote economic development in both urban areas and the countryside."

Earlier, MNTC completed a 2.7 km expressway that linked the NLEX main to Mindanao Avenue, with the country's largest elevated interchange called Quirino Connector Interchange at its main terminus.

When completed, NLEX C-5 Link will decongest traffic along Commonwealth Avenue and Quezon Avenue—the normal route of southbound motorists from northwest of Metro Manila. This will significantly cut down travel time and generate savings on fuel and vehicle wear and tear.

Initially, the project will be constructed as a 2x2 (4-lane divided) expressway expandable to a 2x3 (6-lane divided) when traffic volume reaches the threshold service level. It will follow an outward-route along Republic Avenue, turn to Luzon Avenue and end at Congressional Avenue Extension.

Right-of-way acquisitions have southeast of Metro Manila will benefit from the more direct route as they would be able to skip the congested routes in EDSA through Edsa and Balintawak Toll Plaza.

The project will have two interchanges at Mindanao and Regalado Avenues, and a grade-separated connection at Congressional Avenue wherein it will connect to the Commonwealth Avenue flyover. There will also be three local crossings at Quirino, Banlat and Elemental Avenues.

It will be fitted with toll collection, traffic management and telecommunications systems in line with standard operating equipment at the MTC.

Considered within the NLEX Harbor Link projects, the NLEX C-5 Link will benefit truck haulers by allowing trucks to go on trips any time of the day bypassing areas enforcing the truck ban.

The 9-km NLEX Harbor Link Project is currently in the pre-construction stage. It will start construction by the fourth quarter of this year with an extension of the NLEX route to the Manila North Road (MacArthur Highway) in Valenzuela City, and eventually to the C-5 Road, which leads to the Port area in Manila. The Harbor Link Project will cost about P3.9 billion. Portion of the project will be constructed as an elevated highway over the existing rail right-of-way of Philippine National Railways (PNR).

The NLEX C-5 Link and the Harbor Link projects complete Phase 2 of MMTC's Manila North Diversion by connection.

Bourse urged to go nationwide

By Michelle V. Remo

SEN. AMANDO Tetangco Jr. of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has suggested that the Philippine Stock Exchange take the lead in putting up technological infrastructure that will allow Filipinos from outside Metro Manila to buy and sell stocks and other securities.

He said allowing more Filipinos, especially those from the small towns and cities outside the metropolis, to engage in trading of securities is necessary to achieve the goal of making the country's capital markets more vibrant.

"The securities infrastructure must be put in place so that more people outside Metro Manila will be able to engage in [portfolio] investments and so that the objective of deepening of the country's capital markets is attained," Tetangco told reporters.

He said the PSE and industry players could be instrumental in helping develop the domestic capital markets by putting up technology that will make stocks and other securities more available to people from outside Metro Manila.

"Securities trading is concentrated in Metro Manila. The PSE, for instance, can help [by spearheading efforts to build] the proposed infrastructure," the BSP chief said.

Although government officials claim significant developments in the country's economy over the past decade, they admit that more Filipinos are still not investment savvy and that the country's capital markets have a huge room to develop.

According to the results of the first-ever Consumer Finance Survey (CFS) conducted by the BSP, most Filipinos are averse to engaging in investment instruments.

The results, which were released last month, showed that in the National Capital Region, only less than one percent of Filipino households have investments in stocks, government securities, other securities or mutual funds. In areas outside NCR, the percentage of households that have investments in these instruments is even lower.

The BSP said that its core contribution to efforts to deepen the country's capital markets is to continue building financial literacy programs in various parts of the country and even in other outside the country where there are large concentrations of overseas Filipino workers.

Tetangco said in that in BSP-financed literacy programs, audiences are taught the basics of savings, portfolio investments, and entrepreneurship.

"There is a need to educate Filipino households on the advantages of saving in financial institutions and investing in various forms of financial instruments," the BSP said in the CFS report.

The survey results also showed that Filipinos in general are not inclined to be optimistic and prefer relying on fixed incomes, such as salaries.

LIFESTYLE Wellness

They're super bodies– but more than just bodies

RED TEAM'S Jaso Macasaet and Aizel Shane Smith placed second at the fun games, and to the overall runner-up walk

By Annelle S. Tayao

FROM THE way they ran, jumped, climbed and kayaked through a mile-long cardio obstacle course, this year's batch of Century Tuna Superbods proved it takes more than a sexy figure to win the competition. One had to have the stamina, agility, presence of mind and, most importantly, discipline, to come out on top.

With the theme "Salute to Sets," Century Tuna's flagship event returned to Boracay's white sand shores after a three-year break on April 14 for the 11th edition of Century Tuna Superbods 2012. The winners, now both half a million pesos richer, are models Monika Ilva Maria, 20, and Julio Iquiñana, 24.

A former US Marine, Filipino lipidologist is no stranger to discipline when it comes to health, diet and exercise. "You have to find a routine (diet, fitness regimen, workout) and stay with

THEME | C2

CENTURY Tuna Superbods 2012 winners Monika Ilva Maria and Julio Iquiñana

They're super bodies–but...

From page A1

it," he said. "There will be days when you think you've not gaining anything, but (credence to the disciplined enough to look past that), because being fit is not going to come overnight." Spradleon is also an outdoor enthusiast, and enjoys scuba diving, target shooting and snowboarding.

Compensate

Likewise, Ms. Watts knows how to keep her diet in check. "You can always indulge yourself but you have to compensate for that," she said. "For example, if you have a cheat day, you just have to work out more to do it balanced." She lists the gym whenever she can, and was an active volleyball player in college at the La Salle University.

"This is our fourth Superbody event. It's not unusual because we're trying to make it different," said Coventry Time Group product manager Angela Gonsalves. "It's not the usual competition show; people get more involved in it."

Spradleon said Ms. Watts burned 14 others fearless after weeks of rigorous workouts and training on public speaking and modeling. The competitors then culminated in a beach showing, but games and a fantasy pageant at the beachfront of which is frozen up to Sunset 1.

The fun games, hosted by Magic 89.1/Cl Dany Cruz, began mid-morning with a "mud dash." Finalists, divided into 10 teams of two, went on the beach in front to Palafitte in the first 2, where they had to run from knee-deep.

CONTEST Canning Corp. VP and general manager Eric Ramos and Century Time group product manager Gela Gandeza

plant as obstacle course to hop, jump, leap on rubber tires to survive, jumping over three floor hurdles, crawling and climbing over a seven-foot wall.

The contestants then had time to catch their breath to they attempted pumping up to six beach balls. Some women were so intense that they were to take their air pumps, leaving them with no choice but to manually blow up into the

DERBY Runner

finish balls.

After completing that task, the teams headed around 20 feet outside the arena where a big containing a tent. Here back on shore, each pair had to pitch their tent before putting up their respective flags, which had the team's color.

The Red Teams (aged-listed 26-year-old Noel Shane Smith and 28-year-old Jace Macaraeg) were ahead of the pack during the first games, but, as the last minute, were overtaken by Spradleon and Bartender Mary Grace Sicilo, 19, of the Brown Team.

"We didn't know they (the Team) were beating," said Sicilo. "Our strategy was really to have consistent and effective movements," adding Spradleon doesn't have Tagalog, so even if I was to say something talking in English, I still won't be it."

Smith and Macaraeg came in second in the games. Coincidentally, the pair also won second place overall, winning P30,000 each.

Celebrity endorsers

One could hardly pass through Ayala's beachfront during the night's beauty pageant and swooning, as the crowd gathered not just to see who would win, but to get a glimpse of Coventry Time celebrity endorsers Derek Ramsay and Anne Curtis. Other celebrities at the event were Alyssa Alcantara, Jolson Mendell and Cavaquinho Gomez.

Ramsay opened the show, sounding corner stage and declaring: "Have you able to count his 20 abs?" one panel quipped, with the hunky Bandera Curtis, in a black bikini under a long, sheer black cover-up, soon called out the abs of the contestants, commanding them to drop on their hands and knees, "and give me 20!"

Judges were fashion designer Rau Laurel and Cheche Inerz (whose swimsuits and resort wear were modeled by the finalists), photographer Marc Nicolas, Cosmo Coventry Group vice president and general manager Greg Hanson, PGAV Communications president and chief creative officer Ariel Ocampo, Cosmopolitan editor-in-chief Myrla Bonn, TV host Tim Yap, and Fashion Blogger Jenny Tipgenoy.

Finalists were judged according to the following criteria: beauty and body, 50 percent; health and fitness and question and answer portion, 50 percent.

Breathtakingly one of the hardest questions was thrown at Spradleon by Nicolas: "What do you think is the most important invention?"

To which Spradleon responded: "I'm not sure, I'm stumped. The wheel. I think it's the most symbolic of all inventions."

Arguably the best answer of the night came from multi-record runner-up K. Reynolds, 23, who responded to Chelsea Jarvis's question on what having a healthy mind really means: "It means constantly educating yourselves. We have to pursue education throughout our lives." Reynolds secured runner-up with 22-year-old model Amelie Olalino. They each won P10,000.

Other awards handed out that night were Power Photo (Spradleon) and Asset (Reynolds). 23, a graduate of San Carlos Cebu resident; first in Sent Nine (Ms. Manta and Ke. second University student Aj Hanova, 20), and People's Choice (Hanova) and 25-year-old entrepreneur JP Yap.

While it was time out for the other finalists, Ms. Watts and Spradleon are gearing up for a new kind of challenge as Coventry Time's newest ambassadors. "I have to step up on my game. I'm not used to being in the public's eye," said Spradleon. "I'm going to have to learn how to speak to the press, and just be a figure people can look up to."

Added Ms. Watts, who said she will be using her cash winnings to help out with her family's business: "There's other people a lot of pressure. We both are going to do our best to give justice to the reward they gave us."

MASTERPiece and Jansen Mariano at the mud dash

WINNER Cerna

Why do the dead visit the living?

INNER AWARENESS

Jennifer P. Encarnacion

DEAR MR. Linares,

Thank you for sharing with the rest of the world your wisdom and understanding on the paranormal. My sister and I read your books, which have been really helpful to us. We also follow your articles in PSN and listen to your DWIM radio show every Sunday. Congratulations and more power and blessings to you!

I sometimes see shadows or silhouettes moving in the house, office, buildings, etc. and these sometimes frighten me. "real people" like kids running around or a man sitting on his desk in a long coat things like that.

Last year, I accidentally stepped on a ghost in Sagada. I was on a ghost hunting mission with a group of friends. After the event, I started having rashes all over my body and face. I had to be realized to the ER the next day. Doctors could not diagnose the cause of my swelling bodies. I had to research it on the net to see if my experience, and that's when I found out I accidentally stepped on a ghost while hunting seats in Greenhills.

Anyway, my question is really about the very recent and unexpected death of my former boyfriend. We were together for only three to four months toward the last quarter of 2007, and we were both at our crossroads. We both decided to go ahead separately. He went to the Middle East, and I to the US. We were still close and in contact until 2008, when we started to drift apart.

To cut the long story short, we became "acquaintances" when we experienced (physically) and dinner was a time I got to bitter and angry with him that I told him he was a jerk or worse. He didn't recall it so, honestly, I wrote to have blocked him and that chapter in my life off, and I didn't even remember him. but what he told to me when I said that.

Then our friends told me that he passed away last March 12 in the US after scuffling accident. After a statement of condolence, my emotions (shock, grief, pain, regret, guilt...) When this was all confirmed, I sent flowers to his wake, and offered daily masses for his soul in the US. Fortunately he was even sent here in Manila. I was not able to be there two times and the seeing question in my head was answered, when his best friend told me that we had something special.

An audience

I dreamt of him twice. The first one was after his cremation. He was standing and looking at a wall filled with pictures of his supposed lover and talked to him. We looked like everyone else chatting. I do not recall what we talked about. It was like I was an audience in my dream. However, he looked sad, regretful and bitter. The second dream was last week. I was inside a store at the mall, and there was this guy at this shop who placed a gold bracelet with charms on my right wrist. While putting it on, he told "Mibot (Bicolano term for sweetheart), I'm sorry" and told his will talk to you when you're ready." I had no reaction in my dream, I was paranoia.

Also, the week he died, my Chapstick on my dresser rolled and dropped on the floor. The other day, my round metal bracelet was flung from the top of the dresser, and rolled under my bed.

Lastly, I find myself being "urged" to visit his crypt on a specific date, sometimes twice a week. I don't mind. I still cry and feel sad when I remember him or visit him. May I know if you think that what I am going through is normal for someone in the first recovered? Or do I feel this spirit?

I guess what I am asking is 1) When a person dies unexpectedly, does his soul linger on earth or more on to the next life? 2) Are my "urges" to visit him in his crypt my own subconscious way of making up for my guilt, or is it possible that his soul wants me to visit? 3) Is it a good thing to pray and to ask Mibon that we talk to each other to my dreams?

Thank you so much for your time and help.

Sincerely,
MIBOLEN

Dear Amelie,

I am glad to know that you and your three mind are books helpful to you. Both and my Sunday radio program were DZMM Teleradyo.

Here are my comments on your letter:

1. There is a community of elementals, astral spirits of elves, and other beings that inhabit the church in Greenhills, Mahon.

2. You only about your relationship with your ex-boyfriend looks very important details I need to answer your questions more accurately. For example, why did you get home so angry with your boyfriend? Why did you call him "a jerk" and an "a-hole"? What did he do to you that made you react that way to him? Another thing we close is, why do you feel guilty? What did you do that made you feel guilty?

3. You dream about him because he is still unlikbound and wants you to know he is alive. He still has not accepted his death. In the second dream, he told you that he still has to "release you are ready" He will actually do this in soon as you get over your extreme grief.

4. The paranormal or paleopsychic activities you experienced in your room with the Chapstick and bracelet could be his doing, not crying he is still around...or they could also be the work of the nature spirits in Greenhills who follow suit you.

The soul does not forget

5. It is normal for lovers and even ex-lovers to experience extreme grief when one dies even if they already parted ways, because the soul does not forget. Spirits communicate with the living in many different ways, including either the sense of sight, smell, touch, and even sometimes more.

6. I can't answer your question on whether your strong urge to visit his crypt weekly is caused by your guilt feelings, unless I know more. Did you feel guilty over that he is dead. You obviously are not the cause of his death, so I can't understand.

7. The length of time a newly departed soul stays on earth depends on his or her state of consciousness. Sometimes it takes only a few days before a soul accepts to the next higher plane. The 40-day period is just a matter of tradition. The Dalai Lama explained that even early Egyptians beliefs about death. Elvis Presley was still he seen in Memphis, Tennessee 26 years after his death. And so are some well-known historical figures in England and France.

8. Prayers help the dead realize that they are dead. But it is not advisable to call on the spirits of the dead because you only disturb them. It is quite wrong to communicate with the dead. You find ways to do it. If he does not, then you can assume he has already accepted his fate and a new to peace.

E-mail: jennifercencarnacion@yahoo.com and www.psychicmasters.com; listen to my radio program on DZMM Teleradyo every Sunday, 8-9 p.m. Call 410-0744 or 09209189962 for questions. The next Basic DAP and Intuitive Development seminar is scheduled on May 12-13, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Rm. 308 Penn Plaza I, Legaspi St. Greenhills, Mahon.

Pet model search for a cause

GALA THE chance to win treats from Bow & Wow and get your pets featured on the cover of Bow & Wow Times, then upload a picture of your pug or wiener dog with a valid contest entry (can be obtained with a P300 single receipt purchase at any Bow & Wow store), and let Facebook users cast their votes and final setting the semi-finalists for final deliberation by Bow & Wow judges.

Every qualified entry received in the Bow & Wow Mini Pet Model contest will give a per food donation to the Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), an organization advocating humane treatment of animals. Bow & Wow has partnered with PAWS to build this exciting Bow & Wow Mini Pet Model contest that is meant to be a fun, rewarding and worthy event. The winning dog and cat will grace the cover of the mid-issue of Bow & Wow Times, become a "spokesperson" for PAWS and will be one year sponsorship of food and treats from Bow & Wow.

The contest is ongoing as of May 31.

Bow & Wow said only valid food a dog or cat under the care of PAWS, which is constantly in need of funding to continue its mission for animals in the Philippines. Bow & Wow will donate 100 grams of per food for every qualified entry to the Bow & Wow Mini Pet Model submitted through Facebook.

The top 12 contestants will be asked to come in person for the contest of a professional pet photographer who will conduct creative themed photo shoots. Final judging will be undertaken by an elected Bow & Wow representatives, whose decision will be announced 30 seconds of the winning entry's voted score. Criteria for judging are facial expressions, originality and creativity. Bow & Wow pet store is at 3/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, U-GF, Greenbelt 5, Makati City. Visit http://bowandwow.com.ph.

White asparagus at The Tivoli

ROBY VERCELLI, executive sous Chef of Manhattan Grande, Manila's signature restaurant The Tivoli, asserts this season's prized delicacy: fresh white asparagus. "Europe's elongated vegetable is in season," he says. The white asparagus is the star of chef Vercelli's contemporary French cuisine. Dubbed as the "royal vegetable," the best white asparagus come from Germany and France, where the specific environment of soil, temperature, and type play their role in what's spelled Locke. The asparagus is then peeled and June in the with the "Spargelzeit" asparagus season in Germany. Bless includes, for starters, White Asparagus with Foie Gras Foie Gras and Truffle Sauce, with Parma ham garnished with Hollandaise sauce.

They are also offered as entertainment to more cooks-on-the-Lands Dream, Kalamata Olives and Lamb Jus en Roulade Leche San Rizo, Berry Tomato and Cheddar Sauce as an main course we can well call to eat with traditional Weiner Schnitzel, Veal Pulled in a delicious veal bordelaise.

White asparagus, unlike the green one, is less fibrous, making it remarkably tender and giving it a succulent, delicate taste. It is also good for the health, a good source of vitamins A, B and C, has high amounts of antioxidants, and considerable antioxidant.

The Tivoli is open for lunch 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, and for dinner 6:30-10:30 p.m., Monday-Saturday. Call (5)8888888, e-mail manila.reservations@tivoli.ph.com.

Mother's Day promo at F1 Hotel

Mothers who will stay at F1 hotel on May 6-10 will be given an Instant Beauty Treatment worth P1,500 and a Buffet lunch or dinner buffet for two at F1 Restaurant; free entrance to Fame Salon and 10 percent off on all their other services, and free P500 gift certificate from Kamiseta. Moreover can also enjoy P1,000 and P1,500 rates inclusive in F1 Hotel's Deluxe Room and City Suite, respectively. F1 Hotel will also be giving moms a free lunch or dinner buffet when they dine at F1 Restaurant of they have four or more companions (adult rates) and avail the buffet based on published rate. Free admission privileges will also be awarded to those moms who will stay dine.

Hotel Member Premier F1 Hotel is at 32nd street, Bonifacio Global City. Call (02)8888888, 8887888, e-mail reservations@premierf1hotel.com.

What is body intelligence?

By Micah Felipe Mendoza
Contributor

HAVE YOU ever wonder why some people easily achieve fitness results, and others find it more difficult despite the effort? Maybe it's time to explore the concept of body-intelligence, and learn more on how to improve it.

According to Jim Gavin, Ph.D., professor of applied human sciences at Concordia University and author of the article "Body Intelligence: A Guide To Self-Awareness" published in the November-December 2000 issue of IDEA Fitness Journal, body intelligence or BQ "refers to how aware you are of your body (awareness), what you know (knowledge) and what you actually do for and with your body (engagement)."

Just like an IQ score, our BQ also has different ranges: deficient, sufficient and evolutionary. You might be sufficient in one or two aspects but deficient in one. It is important to know the range of your BQ to know which areas to focus on. Having a higher level of body intelligence offers several advantages:

• being fully aware of your body signals, capabilities and limits will help prevent over-exertion and body abuse from over-exercising and too much dieting.

• Knowledge of safe and effective health and lifestyle practices learn eradicates myths and predispositions will protect us from the dangers of quick fix diets and supplements.

• The correct lifestyle knowledge and skillswill lead to health and fitness.

Awareness

An exercisee who knows a lot about health and fitness and who examines himself to a consistent extreme program and a none diet might not be fully aware of his stress levels and health's condition as caused by his job, family obligations, and self-imposed pressure to look weight.

He sees a person who has a healthy lifestyle, but in reality, may be susceptible to mental, emotional and physical woes, as he does not know about due to a lack of body awareness that disrupts balance in his lifestyle and body systems.

The first conquerored BQ is awareness. Sometimes, we feel confident and call ourselves "healthy" because we know what to eat and what exercises to do. But an intelligent body knows how to listen to signals right away so it can easily adjust to the situations, and therefore achieves balance. We, you need to listen to your body's heed.

• If you feel that you are overdoing your workout and it already adds less results more, then relax a break. Take time to meditate until the positive becomes a habit.

• Nourish your body by getting enough sleep, and commit to excellent eating and exercise programs by learning how to communicate with your body.

• Get regular health check-ups to see what you still need to work on.

• Try mind-body fitness like yoga, Pilates, tai-chi and the Alexander technique to be more aware of your mind-body connection.

• Have your health and lifestyle journal, so you can really see how you are faring in your quest for a fitness-free body. You can write down your food, exercises, sports, sleep, water intake, and even how your body feels every day.

MEDITATION will help improve body awareness.

LEARNING basic fitness and nutrition from an expert

Knowledge

As yo-yo dieter, who will always try celebrity diets on what she hears about from her officemates without understanding the principles of healthy eating needs to work more on her 'body knowledge. She might be at risk for health problems because of unsafe weight loss practices.

Body knowledge is essential in achieving safe and effective health and fitness results. If your motivation is high and you are trying hard to be as healthy as you can be, chances be accepted health guidelines and international standards to maximize your time and efforts and stick to safe practices in diet, weight loss and exercise.

• Read updated health information from books, newspapers, magazines and the Web. You can ask a health professional for recommended books and websites.

• Consult credible medical and fitness professionals to understand more about your lifestyle, health and fitness condition, and to confirm your readings.

• Attend health and fitness seminars in your community to learn and experience the latest health and fitness trends. You can also invite health and fitness professionals to your workplace.

Engagement

An expert pronouncement might be fail, by aware of his body, what needs to be done, and the current health updates, but unless he/she chooses to put off his "healthy living plan" due to workload and lack of time.

This person might have a chance to start the program, but finds it difficult to stick to a new eating and exercise routine, so he ends up going back to his old habits. The problem in this example is the failure to consistently engage the body in the desired lifestyle habits.

According to Gavin, engagement isn't just about "doing it," but about doing the right thing repeatedly until you move on to the next right thing. This is all about consistency, getting results, and then progressing to the next level of health and fitness. However, we should always do what's best and most realistic, based on one's needs and conditions, to encourage sustained adherence.

• Effective engagement of healthy habits requires body awareness (first pillar) and body knowledge (second pillar) to ensure that you have a strong foundation.

• Adopt a realistic lifestyle program that you can follow based on your schedule, food preferences, and goals. Always be open to ask help from experts, friends and loved ones.

• Find ways to vary your fitness program to sustain your motivation, and therefore avoid burnout, boredom and plateaus.

• Practice time management to ensure long-term commitment.

E-mail the author at micahfelipe@gmail.com. Follow her on twitter @micahfelipe.

Wellness on a different level

INSIDE OUT has the potential to deepen our knowledge and expand our consciousness. Here's a personal story to prove it.

Creation is all about evolution. We are five sensory human beings who can evolve into multi-sensory people. This, according to Gary Zukav in his book "The Seat of the Soul."

It is widely believed that the great teachers of the world, like Christ, were multi-sensory. He lived and died reflecting a higher purpose, that of a person who transcended his five-sensory human perception and understanding.

Many inspired leaders like Gandhi and Martin Luther King aspired to expand their realities to create a larger picture of themselves as individuals who play a significant role in the dynamics of life itself.

They acted in accordance with values that directed their movements and actions, fueled by their higher selves. And this higher self aligns in an unseen world, the realm of the soul.

So what does the way of thinking have to do with an and our everyday lives? Actually it has everything to do with us—whether you are a parent, sibling, businessman or homemaker.

Truth no. 1: You have a soul.

Truth no. 2: You have a personality.

There is a distinction between the two. Your personality is an expression of your mentality. It experiences anger, hatred, fear, jealousy, regret, loneliness. The personality can judge, abuse, manipulate in the pursuit of external power. But while the personality can be loving, forgiving and wise, these experiences are only reflections of the soul.

The heart of the matter is this: A five-senses, or individual is not aware of his/her soul. Moreover, he/she cannot recognize the strategic influence of the soul.

A multi-sensory individual is aware of the soul, and always looks inward as a basis for expressing one's self consciously. When you align your personality with the soul, this is the beginning of your evolution.

To do this:

1. Decide to take action on your personal evolution by practicing conscious choice.

Unconscious choice leads to unconscious evolution. Conscious choice equals conscious evolution.

Visualization: If you follow this strictly, then you should no longer justify this statement: "I could not help myself."

2. Ask yourself what truly motivates and inspires you. Reach inside of you, stop looking outside. The answers, more often than not, are within.

Intention

Since everything in our world is physical. Our thoughts are forms made of energy in light. And how you think and feel, how you behave, and more importantly, how you live your life is reflective of how you view the light within you.

To do: Challenge and change a negative pattern like anger or jealousy by replacing it with compassion, understanding and trust.

After, confronted by a negative person, acknowledge choose to take control of the situation by changing your reaction to the negativity.

Surround the "bad vibes" by shielding yourself with light and reflecting that same light with calm. Think powerful thoughts until you are power itself. This can overcome the heart to others. And yes, even in yourself.

Let's get real by putting emotion and intention into action.

Getting fit

And you think that I would just leave you in an altered state of consciousness without making it all happen for you in the real world?

So you want to get moving in your fitness goals. Then don't just make fitness goals. Convert them into a plan.

That is the process: dreaming, visioning, planning, doing.

One book in the office.

Ask: Do I want to be fit?

Decision: I will be fit.

Acts: Plan and execute your fitness regimen.

Where you are currently at the choice: I didn't get "it" if you have embodied on a re-creation of yourself.

Yes, obstacles you could be overcome by guilt. When the stress of work and the challenges of life have drawn on you, others take on in the line of fire inflict your wrath. You have to realize that you are super-capable person. Guess what? That's not at all impossible. Start by accepting the fact that you can change.

Where the "dreams" attempts to get to you:

1. Be vigilant. Know that you are under attack by your "lower self." Awareness is crucial.

2. Silence the dark chatterbox away by simply taking a deep breath. Filling yourself with goodness and happy thoughts, and exhaling your anxieties. Remember: Happiness drives away the blues.

3. Smile, not just with your mouth but with your heart.

Life-boosting tonic

Power juice your way to perfect health. Each time you drink enzyme-rich beverages, your mind-body is evolving.

Ingredients: Anything green in your refrigerator or leftover pie, your garden.

• Handfuls of green leafy vegetables (spinach, lettuce, arugula)

Optional: Alfalfa, bean sprouts, radish)

2 tbsp barley powder
3 glass fresh coconut water
3 packet of wheat grass
3 tsp raw wild honey

Juice the vegetables and mix the rest in a blender. Serve over ice cubed.
Affirm today: "I am amazing."
Love and light

The MEDICard Health and Wellness Bulletin

Take Charge, Doc!

HEAT – RELATED ILLNESSES II

Heat related illness can occur when the body is unable to cool itself adequately. The body normally cools itself by sweating. In some situations, sweating isn't enough and body temperature rises. This can be associated with different effects ranging from a mild heat rash or cramps through to heat exhaustion or the more severe and potentially fatal heat stroke. People can experience heat related illness during periods of extreme heat in summer. It can also occur in athletes or others during periods of physical exertion.

HEAT RASH

Heat rash or 'prickly heat' is a skin irritation caused by excessive sweating during hot, humid weather. It can occur at any age, but is most common in young children. Heat rash looks like a cluster of red pimples or small blisters. It is more likely to occur on the neck and upper chest, or in creases in the groin, elbow or under the breasts.

WHAT TO DO:

Keep the affected area dry. Dusting powder may be used to increase comfort. Avoid using ointments or creams as they keep the skin warm and moist, which may make the condition worse.

HOW YOU ALWAYS: You can prevent heat related illnesses! Here are some tips that may help:

- Drink plenty of fluids during hot weather – cool water is best
- Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink – drink regularly during the whole day
- Using water as a good guide to hydration – it should be clear or light straw coloured, not dark or golden
- Increase natural ventilation by opening windows and using fans
- Keep an air conditioned environment if possible
- Monitor those at high risk – check elderly people twice a day
- Seek your doctor's advice about predisposing medical conditions and medications
- Wear light coloured, loose fitting clothing
- Take yourself and limit strenuous outdoor activity
- Stay out of the sun
- Take a cool shower or bath
- Take time to adjust to the environment
- Never leave a child or elderly person alone in a car
- Avoid alcohol, coffee and other caffeinated drinks, and high sugar drinks
- Limit hot foods

Send them our best wishes and congratulations for their management services to celebrate their 20 years. As part of our dedication to better serve your health needs, we are also increasing our presence in Commercial Heights and Metrowalk Mall Ortigas. Contacting the necessary requirements and services that are superior and their health and productivity inquiries, text Welcome at 804-0000. 804-9622. E-mail: medicard@medicardphil.com

Medicard Philippines

Ayala Life-FGU Center, 6811 Ayala Ave., Makati City, 1200
Telephone: 884-9000 • Fax Nos.: 815-9851 / 815-2733 / 848-8844
Email: inquiry@medicardphil.com • Website: www.medicardphil.com

Work, play and more with Giordano's G-cool shorts

Summer with Giordano comes in a splash of colors with G-cool shorts. As one of the leading brands for quality basics wear, Giordano brings comfort, durability and style to the table with its new line of shorts.

G-cool is the perfect work-and-play outfit that promotes moisture management, thermo control, UV protection and antibacterial protection.

This makes the shorts' fabrics breathable and absorbent, ready to outlast any work or leisure activities that its wearer gets into. What's more, this technology is inherent to the fabric's fibers and does not washout or wear off, making G-cool one of the most environmentally-friendly performance fabrics anywhere.

Made of quality polyester which gives a cool and comfortable feeling all day, the Giordano shorts can be worn in any season—its style is great for hot summer wear but the fabric makes it suitable even during the colder months ahead. G-cool shorts are available in three styles. Plain G-cool is available in six solid colors including metal, gold medal, red ribbon, Malibu and walnut, and priced at PhP1,499 to PhP1,599 a piece.

Cargo G-cool, sold at PhP1,599 to PhP1,699, is available in Irish Linen and Commando Green colors. G-cool with drawstrings are sold at PhP1,599 to PhP1,799 in coal gray and blue coral. All G-cool shorts styles are available in navy and white checkered prints.

Available in all Giordano stores nationwide.

GIORDANO

LIFESTYLE Wellness

Surviving a beast of a race

By Leira R. Cuepo
Contributor

"RIGHT ON: Heather Lee on Boylston," reads a T-shirt at the Boston Marathon Running Expo of 2012—indulgence worthy for those who have never finished the Boston Marathon.

I myself only realized the significance of those words as being the final stretch before the finish line when I was reminded of them by Janet, my 65-year-old roommate on my recent flight from Boston to San Francisco.

She said, of all things in the Runner's Expo, she was the only biker search inquiring. It was the purchase of a 13-time Boston Marathon veteran. Janet has a career total of 30 marathons under her belt, all in sub 4. Her search and personal friend is runner Dick Beardsley, who came in second during the infamous 1982 Boston Marathon, aka "The Duel in the Sun," considered by most runners to be the most dramatic marathon finish ever. Temperatures hit 100°F that day.

The race was eventually won via a sprint to the finish by Alberto Salazar. He won by two seconds and collapsed at the finish line, needing six liters of water fed to him intravenously. Janet was almost as inspiring as my previous roommate I have—on that later). Suffice it to say that when I got to bed ago, I hope I can still run a 5K, much less quickly for Boston.

Janet still looked ravaged, 48 hours after the race, when she said: "This was a race that humbled me. I know it had to happen one day, but I never thought it would happen in Boston. If anyone told me a week from Monday that I would be walking up Heartbreak Hill, I would have laughed in their faces. I am erasing this race from my Evernote list—this kind of runner's search that records heart rate, pace, etc.) history."

She ended the race by spending 33 minutes in the medical tent after crossing the finish line with a power nose clear of 4.30—(dehydration), quick crashed, feet bloodied, and her perfect sub 4 record shattered. Despite all this, Janet was still one of the happier endings of the carnage that was the 116th Boston Marathon.

A cramp in my quads

I've run Boston once before in 2010, and back then, I vow (no hoop fighting a cramp in my quads to notice street signs. But this time around, when I made that left turn Boylston for those final 600 to where you can actually see the finish line, I heard awesome nursing/singing breaks me say, "Oh, thank God, it's almost over."

"It was 89 degrees as wheelchair racers flew around the starting line in Hopkinton at 9:17 a.m. By 12:30 p.m., the [illegible] temperature of the day recorded along the course was in Framingham at 89 degrees." (Excerpt from Metrowest Daily News, April 2012)

While the wheelchair athletes were cruising down Hopkinton, back at the athlete's village, Team Pilot "El Bestio—Larry Ocampo, Manila (my sister) and I—were guzzling funerals, bananas, gel blocks and as much water as our Madison could handle in preparation for what would be an epic battle against not just the famous Heartbreak Hills but the second high temperature!

We should have known from our sweat-soaked jerseys at packet that this was a race that was going to sik each one of us on "dog pretty darn deep."

Despite daily e-mails from the BAA (Boston Athletic Association) offering an option to defer for BM 2013, and admonitions from officials to treat this race as an experience, not a race, my plan A was to run the race at my usual pace—"All out."

Despite the heat warnings, announcements from directors and [illegible] addresses—e.g. "The finish affects everybody. Nobody runs fast in the heat. Nobody benefits from the heat"—I was still determined to push. I did not fly here for the darn fireworks.

I was planning to use my heart rate (HR) monitor as a gauge for how hard to push. I have a pretty high maximum HR (max. around 159-165. I started the race at a clean[illegible] with my HR already at 107, and it never went down. By Mile 11, I was running amidst a sea of pain, as runners all around me were crumbling despite downing cups of water and Gatorade by the gallons.

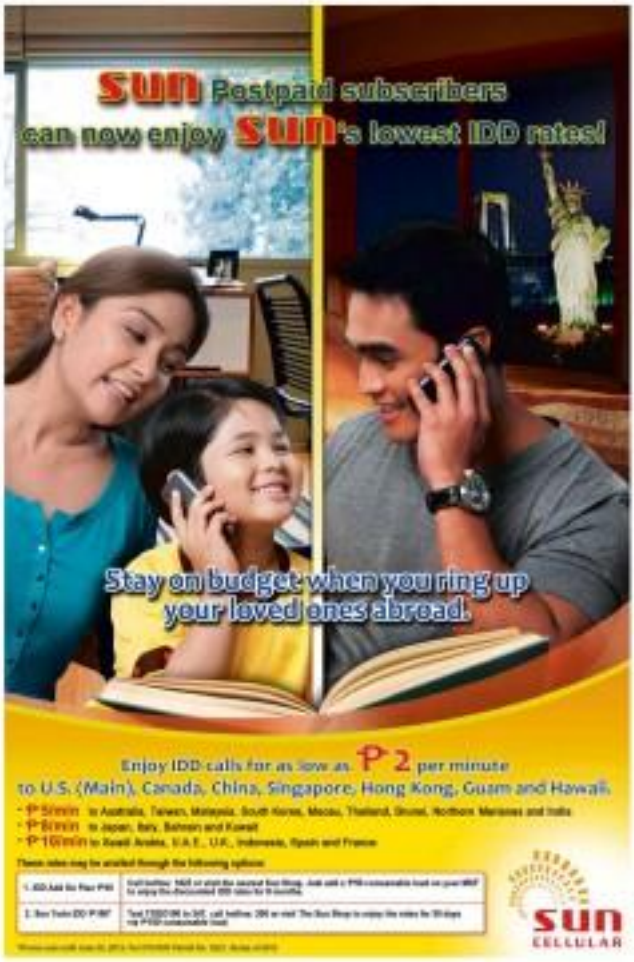
The beautiful running funny of the first half had deteriorated to painful shuffles. Heads were bent down, running steps, and I heard many a mumbled mantra sounding more like prayers: it was heartwrenching to watch so many hearts grind to pain, my own probably closely mirroring theirs.

I watched my HR average at 174 spike up to 186 avoid Mile 20, where I decided on rip it off my chest and run by feel. The numbers were too scary to watch, and the band around my chest was making it difficult to breathe. But even when I took it off, the vise grip on my chest did not ease up. And no amount of Gatorade, salt tabs, cold water poured over my head or walking resulted to work.

Keel over

At 3 was seriously debating whether I was going to keel over from school attack or heatstroke. I would also check my pace and **internally negotiate with myself** on how slow a pace I could realistically may/walk/crawl and still finish at a sub-4.

I was hoping that I would actually feel the downhill from Mile 22 and downhill my [illegible] heart, but it actually got worse! Here, the wheels literally came off. Each step felt heavier than the last. I have never walked so much during such a short distance in any race. This race was really proving [illegible]



LEICA Corpo. Mirella Cuepo and Larry Ocampo wearing special bike jerseys pose race to honor the struggle against cancer of Pala Di nasmosas Multi-Hara

GARFIELD BY JIM DAVIS

A. UPIN BY JES MENDOZA

PUGAD BABOY BY PHILIP LUYOD

DICK TRACY BY JOE STATON AND MIKE CLARK

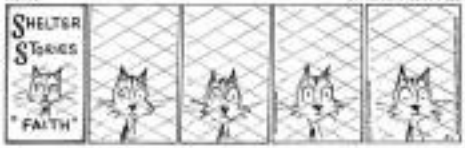
LOVE-MOTS BY ELIZABETH HONGLO

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

RIKO MACHINE BY RYAN ABION

SEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

HUTTS BY PATRICK MCDONNELL



SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TULDOK BY MARA COLL

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You know the old adage about what you put in is what you get out. Not only will you benefit most if you work hard, but you'll also enjoy yourself more. Don't be afraid to get involved.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Some people, despite their best efforts, are destined to be underachievers. Fortunately, you're not one of them. Your ability to work with others will help you get ahead.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Do not let your ego or lack of self-confidence get in the way of making improvements at home, especially in plumbing, bathrooms and laundry areas. You also can reorganize perhaps extending your territory.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You're not afraid to take a risk, and that's one of the things that makes you so successful. Your willingness to go the extra mile will help you get ahead.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) You're keen to see what you can do to work with others. You want to learn to share your ideas and be open to the ideas of others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Today you are keen to improve your relationships with others. You want to be able to work with others and share your ideas and be open to the ideas of others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Some serious challenges abound, but with some very good ideas today. Creativity, you can always go back to making improvements somewhere in your life.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Some hurdles to overcome today, but you're up to the challenge. You want to be able to work with others and share your ideas and be open to the ideas of others.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) A discussion with others to improve your relationships with others. You want to be able to work with others and share your ideas and be open to the ideas of others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) You might want to work with your spouse to develop some new ideas. Remember to communicate how to do with creative activities. You are a very creative person.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You have many good ideas today, but you're not sure how to put them into practice. Maybe you're looking for ways to clean up any mess.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) You have many discussions with others and your family. A heated spat can improve the atmosphere today. You may not complete to clean up. Be in the act.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs go to www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	1	2	4	3	5	9	7	8
4	3	5	7	8	9	1	2	6
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Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

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Difficulty Level ★★

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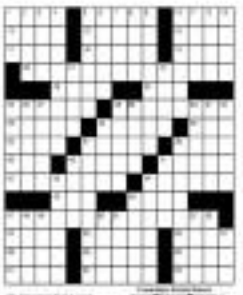
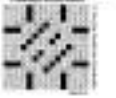




DOCTORS Tristan de Chalus of New Zealand and Dave Chuckry of Australia get ready to operate on one of their 71 patients at Dinalupihan Municipal Hospital Memorial Center in Cabucao

LAST year's patient, Jessa Briones, shares ASR medical director Dr. Leigh Olivo and founder Vin Hoffmann

Mission restores hope for disfigured children

SOME 10 days, volunteer surgeons from Australia, New Zealand and Germany recently screened prospective patients and operated on five full days on 71 underprivileged children with cleft lips and palates during a medical mission dubbed Operation Restore Hope (ORH).

In a place like Cabucao City, where 37 percent of the population are living in poverty, children born with facial disfigurement and deformities would otherwise have remained undetected and permanently disadvantaged.

Vin Shepard Hoffmann heads the Aklat at Kinabukasan Foundation Inc. (ASR Foundation) that does the recruitment and initial screening of prospective patients prior to the arrival of the foreign teams.

Hoffmann, formerly involved and film producer, was settled in Australia with her German husband Ulrich. And rallied their Filipino-Australian friends residing abroad to set up the ASR Foundation, which raises funding and hospital support with help from the Rotary Club Pamalayan South East. Medical director Dr. Leigh Olivo works on all the follow-ups on patients who have been operated on.

Interest in transforming lives is what narrows the Foundation's partnership with the nonprofit, nongovernmental, nonsectarian charity based in New Zealand, Australia and Germany, who, in 15 years now. The charity was conceived by renowned cosmetic surgeon Dr. Lionel Hodgkinson.

This year's Operation Restore Hope was funded by sponsorships on private category, Dr. Tristan de Chalus of New Zealand and Dr. Christopher Mitchenson from Germany, who, together with their medical teams of 27 volunteers from New Zealand, Germany, Australia, United Kingdom and the USA, donated their time and skills, pro bono were accommodation and medical supplies which they have brought for the public hospital to use.

Immediate solutions for rheumatoid arthritis patients

JEDESSA TRASADAS was so younger to hard work. Having come from a big family of 14 brothers and sisters, she had been working since she was young. However, after turning 50, she began to notice the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis (RA) that she associated with her being menopausal. "I noticed that my hands had started to swell," she said. "And the joints were very distressing." Still, she thought nothing of it and managed to go about her business normally.

Later, she noticed her ankles to swell as her toes beginning to swell, too. Along with the debilitating pain and discomfort. Then, the swelling grew out over her whole body. "It was excruciating. It felt like my entire body was swollen," Jedessa found she could not even do simple tasks such as sit normally, touch her cheek, or comb her hair.

"When I first met Jedessa, she had impaired movements and diffused pain including swelling of the knees which greatly affected her mobility," said Dr. Ivan Vera, a rheumatologist from UST Hospital. He stressed the importance of distinguishing RA from other common arthritis and the need to diagnose and treat affected patients early to prevent long-term functional disability. He initially prescribed disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDS) and painkillers, which she had already started, but the medicine alone were not yielding enough positive results.

With the new treatment plan in place, in February 2012, Vera began Jedessa on methotrexate. "By the third month of the treatment, I started to see the effects of the medicine," Jedessa shared. "My mobility was returning and the pain was incredibly decreasing."

She explained that RA is a chronic autoimmune mediated disease that affects persons usually during their productive years. She also stressed the importance of distinguishing and treating RA patients to lessen the impact of disease burden and improve productivity in the society and school. He indicated that methotrexate is a prescription drug and should only be taken in accordance with the advice of a physician.

Surviving a beast of a race

Photographs D1

POLO Trivasanana Rita Lacson and marathoners Luisa Carpo, Amanda Carpo and Lolit Ocampo at 7 a.m. before boarding bus to race start. Temperatures are still a cool 78°F.

Bel-Air's 'Pasinaya' slated May 5

WHEN MME Lichauco, Bel-Air Makati's barangay captain, speaks of the annual Pasinaya, her eyes light up. Year after year, the residents of Bel-Air come together to enjoy a three-day celebration where everyone—from household kasambas to toddlers, from teens to young adults, all the way to senior citizens—gets to participate.

"We related to Haw-as (Holy) that would be our way of returning the blessings that the community has received," Lichauco said. "It is a non-Filipino thing, the rest of all our fiestas where you come to think about it. The divine to express thanks through a communal show of talent and devotion is what makes all our fiestas so endearing. So, we came up with what we called as Community Day in 2005. It was only simple then."

Through the years, the fiesta has changed to accommodate the youth of Bel-Air. Previous members in past shows have called grand Opera and Asian opera, Bob Fosse and Hollywood, the Emmybasit and Bamboo is enacting prizes and influences.

As the Kapitana points out, "The Pasinaya had to grow also. We wanted the young people to come and join us. So, we began to include other forms of dance, modern and contemporary. While the senior members put their Filipiniana and ballroom numbers, the younger ones got their hip-hop, their jazz, their acrobatics for interludes. But we always try to incorporate something Pinoy in the show."

This year's extravaganza—the 10th annual edition—takes its cue from the popular ad campaign of the Department of Tourism. "We wanted to take to space," says Pasinaya Co-Head Jeanne Ann Lichauco-Ilusorio. "So we took the tagline 'It's more fun in the Philippines' and made it 'It's more fun in Bel-Air.' We want to be part of the Philippine experience."

BALLROOM dancing during Pasinaya

Co-Muslim, creative head. "So we took the slogan and inserted it [into it]. This year, we purchase 'It's All in Numbers: Enter to Win!' We wanted a modern, funky set. Fancy spins, so we are using Pinoy kwela as a peg for our 1950s. But since this is really about living in the here and the now, I like the fact that another theme from Broadway pop. Original Filipino Music. From 'Da dance revue'."

The May 5 showcase will culminate the three-day Pasinaya, scheduled on May 6. "Most of our numbers are limited to our Bel-Air, while the showcases is available to all the rest of the event, there are other events that are equally joyful. The 'Gabi ng Kasambahay' is the night when our helpers get their chance to shine. Then, there is the fashion show, where all our models are residents. There is a big fashion as well as a food festival. There is a pet show. Plus, a big Mass as well," Wambay one in Bel-Air," says Lichauco in a wink.

When asked what really makes the show so gratifying to mount, Lichauco answered: "Before, when we started, we were content to think that we were not gone, that we were just having fun. Now, the spirit has changed. We want to be good. We want to be perfect! I guess, when the younger people joined in, they brought a different kind of energy to the show. So, as early as three months before, regular rehearsals are being held. And everyone attends. Everyone wants it to be published! So every 'music guys' entrance!"

But the best effects of the Pasinaya are felt long after the lights have faded, smudge. "I think the most lasting heritage of the Pasinaya is the fact that we have built a real town spirit here in Bel-Air," said Lichauco.

THE PASINAYA gives both adults and youngsters a chance to shine.

Good Boy dog food launches campaign for rescued pit bulls

LAST DECEMBER, a warehouse raid in Bulacan, Cavite, saw the biggest and first-ever online dogfighting bust in the country.

Over 250 aspin/pit bulls were seized at the compound, many of them with severe injuries and in poor physical condition.

Aside from wounds and scars, a significant number of the dogs were found to have been subjected to cruel and illegal gambling.

Although locally based, the dogfighting ring was an international operation with online betting placing hundreds of thousands to as much as a million dollars (over while fights were broadcast live via Internet.

Two dogs were made to fight viciously for 3-5 minutes. The losing dog was made to battle another dog in the next round.

Still, there are an evil win, as even any trained fight clubs in both dogs, whether prize fights or collection drainage, end up wounded and bloody.

Many of the dogs were in horrendous shape due to injuries sustained in the fights, abuse and starvation that some had to be humanely euthanized.

Over 70 dogs were transferred to the rehabilitation center of Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) where they were treated and given adoption or an appropriate sanctuary.

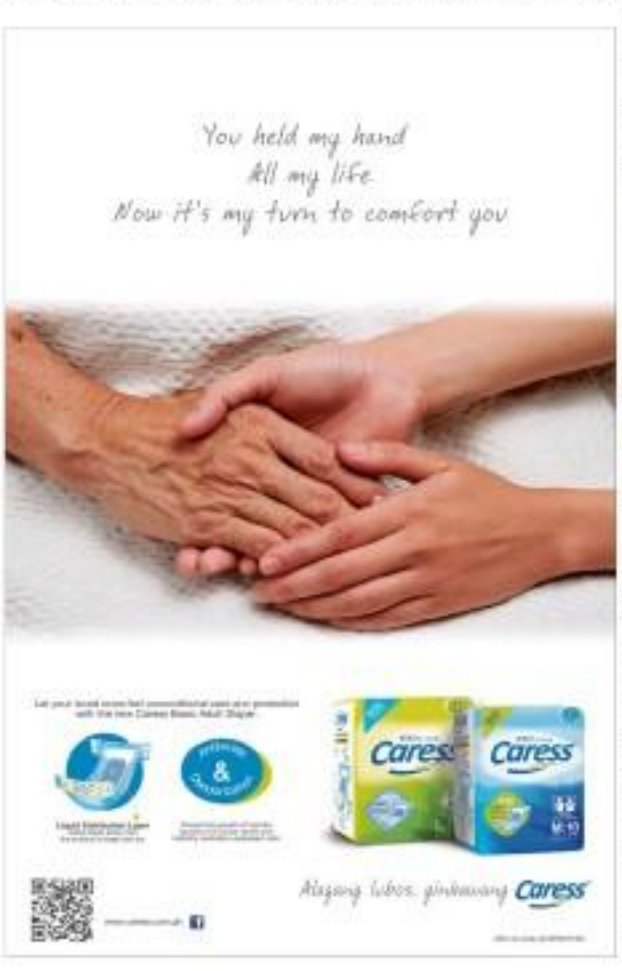
Last January, the remaining pit bull survivors were relocated in Cebu under the care of Animal Rescue Organization (ARO) to fully recuperate and undergo rehabilitation.

However, funds are much needed for the really long rehabilitation and boarding.

Sandra Bel Hamilton division manager Mon Abrasaa has pledged support.

For every 20kg purchase of Good Boy Original or 10.1kg Good Boy Lamb and Beef dog food, a cup will go to the pit bull food bank. The campaign will run for six months.

Good Boy Dog Foods can be bought at the Builders and Hardware Centers, DE shops, Waltermart, Puregold, SCC and other outlets.



ENTERTAINMENT

Alice Evonne G. Velarde

Lady Gaga's Manila gig extended

Did You Know...

Arnel still rockin' after leg injury

By Pinabula Concepcion

ARNEL Pineda in Rockville

THERE was no trace of his injury when Arnel Pineda performed recently at Rockville, his club on Timog Avenue.

The place was packed. Fans well-heeled fans jostled their way to the stage to see their up-close.

The show was a sendoff to the Filipino rock star, who flew to New York the next day for the premiere of Sarsosa Diaz's documentary on him and his band Journey at the Tribeca film fest.

Tea dark

Arnel fell off the stage while performing on tour in the United States in July 2011. "Nabitag dilim, I couldn't see the 7-foot edge," he told the business.

He didn't suffer any fractures, but the tendons in his right leg were damaged. He couldn't rest, the three-month tour had just started. "I was in constant pain, both of my knees hurt," he recounted.

He opted for massage therapy when he got back to Manila. "Di sana ay hilot ang hindi dito sa atin," he said.

At the Rockville gig, Arnel worked up the crowd with the rock repertoire that led to his discovery on YouTube by Neal Schon, Journey co-founder and lead guitarist.

Old times

His voice faltered slightly on a few songs, but the audience couldn't have cared less—it was rock 'n' roll and they loved every minute of it.

Arnel was confidence personified—belting out the high notes and leaping on the last beat. His longtime guitarist Abner Ca-ipe was at his side; it was like old times in Olongapo and Hong Kong.

Arnel and his backup band, Ammo, played non-the-same covers of The Beatles, Billy Joel, The Knack, The Police, Deep Purple, UC, Bon Jovi, Led Zeppelin, Queen, Guns N' Roses, Aerosmith and even Adele.

The crowd stood out because of Arnel's gung-ho attitude and life. Openness when that shortened between honey and sandpaper.

Puzzler

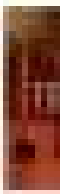
He did Air Supply's "Making Love Out of Nothing At All" and incredibly, made it sound hip.

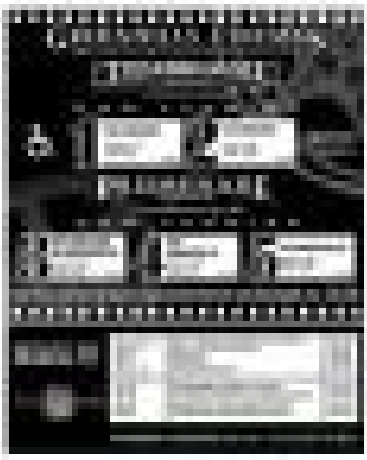
"I have a flight to catch tomorrow," he told the throng at the end of a non-stop, 20-song set.

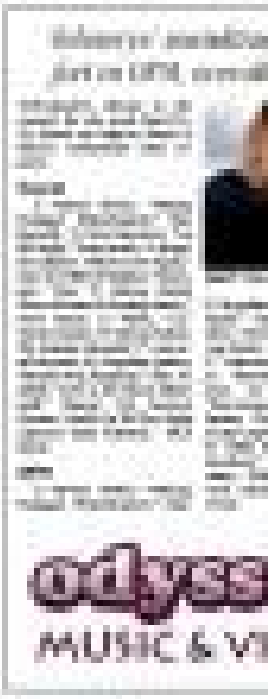
Journey is doing another US tour in mid-July, he told us. "It will open in late September and finish mid-December in Hawaii. We're working on a Manila date in February 2013."

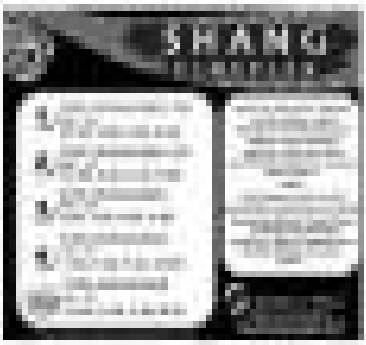
Arnel looked happy and set to go to Rio's three-legs again.

Skabeche perfect for fiestas








SRANG

CINEMAS

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A cabin with many rooms...
Each room leads to a gateway to Hell.
THE CABIN

CINEMA
WATCH IT LIVE VIA SATELLITE
BUY YOUR TICKETS NOW!
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P400

Dolphy's son decries National Artist issue

BOOMER Quiboloy's post on Facebook caught our attention. The controversial preacher-businessman made waves last year when he declared Ariel Ureta, Jr., desperately wants the National Artist award. Boomer says people are putting words into Quiboloy's mouth.

It is not Boomer's intention to antagonize anybody. It's only natural though, for a son to come to his father's defense. So I deem it best to let Boomer use his piece.

Indie producer

We did eliminated the duopoly standard practiced by big theater owners in the past, who only screened Hollywood films, while local movies were relegated to the small cinemas.

"His groundbreaking movie, "Barbie Paloma," which premiered at New Frontier cinema, beat all foreign films in ticket sales ...

"He was also one of the first independent movie producers to break the studio system. He did not stop with the so-called bomba films that were the rage then. If it hadn't been for them and the subsequent intervention of the censorship board in bar bomba movies, our industry would probably have gone to the dogs.

"My father was one of the very few Filipino entertainers abroad ... Today you can find a Filipino executive everywhere in the world, whether at a bank, a hotel, hotel or casino dept.

"Popular comedians today have partnered their formula for success on the way my dad made and sold movies. And who can forget that one dad always made it a point to provide a second movie in an All TV channel, notably on 'Oras ni Dondon' and 'Wanna Sing-Sa Bites?'

"Together with FPJ, Eliseo Soriano and Ramon Revilla, he helped create Movieland (Movie Workers Welfare Foundation Inc.) which helps fellow artists financially. Movieland also educates other artists who want to develop or expand their craft ...

Scholarships

"My dad also created the Dolphy Art Foundation, which awards college scholarships to promising students. He started the practice of giving tributes to people while they were still alive. Before that, all tributes were given posthumously including lifetime achievement awards. My father has helped many people through the years.

"Some people make it appear that my dad is preserved by Imperial. But 'Dhalmau' wasn't owned, and go as far as to taking his trademarks out of context. There were at interviews where he was asked, 'Gusto niyo po ba ng ganito kayong National Artist?' Hindi po sila ba sabi 'Yes.' Nor when my dad passed was, who was the one who went to be a National Artist? If you've been involved in the arts all your life, it's the highest of all honors."

"But it's one thing to submit honestly that he would be honored to be given the award, and quite another to say that my dad is desperate to be given that recognition, and wants, insinuates that he's desperate because he's sick. It's not only doesn't do justice to the legacy of hard work and dedication that my father who loved him, especially our family.

"It is, in fact, his fellow artists and friends in the industry who have been clamoring for his recognition. Even Cecilia Herrera, Lea Salonga, Lea Salonga, Lea Salonga